MEN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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P. CARNEGIE SIMPSON, M.A.

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THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

I.

ST MATTHEW

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

ST MATTHEW

IT is impossible to over-estimate the gain that it is to the Church to possess four Gospels instead of one, for not only is the testimony to the trustworthiness of the facts narrated thereby greatly strengthened, but we are enabled to view these facts from four separate, and largely independent, points of view. From very early times this has been recognised. Thus we find the Gospels compared to the river which, flowing out of Eden to water the garden, was parted, and became four heads, compassing different lands. And still commoner is the practice of ascribing to each of the evangelists a symbol derived from the four living creatures of Ezekiel's vision. The order of application varies; but, as a rule, St Matthew is compared with the *man*, because his Gospel brings out specially the human and kingly character of Christ; St Mark with the *lion*, because his is the Gospel of divine power and strength; St Luke with the *ox*, from the prominence he gives to Christ's sacrificial work; and St John with the *eagle*, because, as St Augustine says, "he soars to heaven above the

clouds of human infirmity, and reveals to us the mysteries of the Godhead."

This must not, of course, be understood as implying that these symbols are completely descriptive, or that in any one Gospel the characteristics of the other three are not also to be found. But they are at least a convenient method of reminding us that no one of the evangelists set to work to record his impressions in exactly the same way, and that our knowledge of the Saviour's person and work is, in consequence, far fuller and deeper.

Of this we shall find frequent examples in the course of the following papers. In the meantime let us turn without further introduction to the man who has given his name to our First Gospel.

I.

The Life of St Matthew.

The few facts that are all that we know regarding the outward events of his life are quickly told. He was the son of a certain Alphæus who is not, however, to be identified with the father of James the Less, and, while his early name was Levi, he received from Jesus, at the time of his call, the new name of Matthew, that is, "*the gift of Jehovah*," by which he continued afterwards to be generally known. By profession he was a "publican" or tax-gatherer,

though he was not, as is often thought, in the direct service of the Roman Government, but of Herod Antipas, who was allowed by Rome to levy the taxes within his own tetrarchy. On any other footing, indeed, it is impossible to imagine a man of Matthew's keen national sentiments engaging in such a work at all. And even as it was, his position could hardly fail to carry with it a certain stigma in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen, which in turn would tend to have a hardening effect on his own character. It is all the more significant, therefore, of the soul of goodness in Matthew, and of the eagerness of his desire to rise above his immediate surroundings, that when Christ's call came to him he obeyed it at once, and that, too, notwithstanding the completeness of the earthly sacrifice that was required of him. For if some of the earlier disciples had been able to return for a time, at least, to their old homes and work, even after Christ's first call was addressed to them, for the tax-gatherer any such course was impossible. He literally "*left all*" to follow Christ, exchanging, in the quaint words of an old writer, "wealth for poverty, a custom-house for a prison, gainful masters for a naked and despised Saviour."

Not, indeed, that we are to imagine that this was the first occasion on which Matthew had heard of the claims of Jesus. Capernaum where he lived had already been the scene of many of the Saviour's mighty works (Mark i. 25, ii. 12; Luke v. 24 f.), and

at his place of toll he must often have heard the new Teacher's gracious words and deeds eagerly discussed. Loftier and purer thoughts and longings had, in consequence, been awakened within him: gradually he had become dissatisfied with his ordinary mode of life, and the atmosphere of distortion and fraud with which it was apt to be accompanied: and it needed only one direct word from Jesus Himself to induce him to follow Him, as His humble disciple.

How faithful too that discipleship proved itself from the first is shown by the farewell feast which, as St Luke tells us, Matthew gave in Jesus' honour, and to which he invited many of his old associates and friends. He was evidently anxious that others should share with him the higher blessings he now enjoyed. And he certainly had his wish, so far at least as the free offer of these blessings to them was concerned. For when the Pharisees and scribes taunted Jesus with the nature of the company in which He now found Himself, they were at once met with the rejoinder that it was just because He was needed so much that He was there. Were any sick? He had come as a physician to heal. Were any sinners? He had come to call them to repentance.

The whole story of Matthew indeed is an emphatic witness to the truth that the gospel is no respecter of persons, and that even in the selection of His more immediate followers Jesus thought not of anything

in their outward surroundings, but simply and solely of their spiritual fitness for their new task. "Confident in the power of truth," says Professor Bruce, "He chose the base things of the world in preference to things held in esteem, assured that they would conquer at the last. Aware that both He and His disciples would be despised and rejected of men for a season, He went calmly on his way . . . *like one who knew that His work concerned all nations and all time*" (*The Training of the Twelve*, p. 20).

Matthew's first call to discipleship was in due time followed by his inclusion in the inner band of the Twelve, where we find him occupying a place in the second circle of four, into which the apostolic company naturally divides itself. From the fact that he is generally mentioned next to Thomas, and that Thomas is the Aramaic for Didymus or Twin, it has sometimes been conjectured that the two were twin-brethren; but for this there is no warrant. We know indeed of no single incident specially connected with Matthew's name in the whole gospel story, nor has any word of his addressed to Christ been recorded. The same silence regarding him distinguishes both the Acts and the Epistles, while the notices of him in early Christian tradition are very fragmentary. After his Lord's ascension he seems to have remained for some years in Jerusalem, and then to have gone as a missionary to Egypt and Ethiopia. According to Clement of Alexandria,

he lived the life of an ascetic, subsisting on "seeds and fruits, and herbs without flesh." His death is usually attributed to natural causes; but in Western works of art he is frequently represented as a martyr, in the act of being slain by the executioner's sword.

Such then is practically all that we know regarding the personal life of Matthew, and it is in keeping with its quiet and uneventful tenor that his name has never occupied a very prominent place in the outward history of Christendom. None of the great cathedrals of the world have been called after him, and it is only in very recent times that we find him adopted as the patron-saint of any church or social guild. And yet Matthew has claims upon our gratitude that can hardly be over-estimated. For is it not to him that we owe the First Gospel, the book which Renan has described as "the most important book of Christendom—the most important book that has ever been written"?

In saying this we cannot, of course, forget that scholars are now generally agreed that this Gospel in the form in which we have it now cannot have proceeded directly from Matthew's pen: it bears too evident traces of being a composite work. At the same time there can be equally little doubt that one of the principal documents underlying it is the series of *Logia*, or Oracles of the Lord, which Papias tells us that the Apostle Matthew "compiled in Hebrew speech; while they were interpreted by each man

according to his ability" (Eus., *H.E.*, iii. 39). And as it is just these discourses that give the Gospel its most distinctive character, we can hardly be wrong in continuing to associate it with the man whose name it bears.

II.

The Gospel according to St Matthew.

The most interesting question for our present purpose is, What is the *aim* of the First Gospel as a whole? What *object* had Matthew specially in view in writing it? That question is usually answered by saying that Matthew as a Hebrew, writing for Hebrews, endeavoured to present the life of Christ in such a way as most to commend it to his fellow-countrymen. And in the main that answer may be accepted, though we must be careful not to lose sight of the evident traces of a wider than a merely Jewish horizon that meet us in his pages. Not to dwell upon these, however, further at present, let us proceed to notice one or two particulars that illustrate his principal thesis—the development of Christianity out of Judaism, the fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth of the long-cherished hopes of God's ancient people.

(1) The *Title* which the writer gives to his work is in itself an indication of this. It is "*The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son*

of Abraham" (i. 1). The Saviour is not introduced as "the Son of God" as by St Mark, nor as "the Son of Man" as by St Luke, nor as "the Word" as by St John, but as one who has been "*born King of the Jews*" (ii. 2). And the emphasis thus laid upon Christ's kingly dignity is continued throughout the whole Gospel. The Saviour is publicly set apart by baptism for His Messianic mission (iii. 13-17). He gathers round Him the men who are to be His ambassadors in the furtherance of His work (iv. 18-22, etc.) He is described as the Son of David with a frequency which we find in none of the other Gospels (ix. 27, xii. 23, xv. 22, xx. 30, xxi. 9). And it is as a King again that He is represented as judging both the Jewish people and the Gentile nations in the hour of His future glory (xxv. 14-46).

(2) We are not surprised, therefore, to find the prominence given by Matthew to the thought of "*the kingdom of heaven*" in Christ's teaching—a phrase which could hardly fail to suggest to His Jewish hearers the utmost realisation of all their hopes. Thus it is with the proclamation of "*the gospel of the kingdom*" that the Saviour's earthly ministry is represented as commencing (iv. 23), and nowhere else in the Gospels is the great sermon which has been described as "the Magna Charta of the new kingdom" given at such length.

Hence, too, the parables of our Lord which St Matthew selects for narration are especially those

which deal with the nature of the kingdom and of its subjects. Examine them, and you will see that they almost always begin with the words, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto . . ."; whereas St Luke shows a preference for what we may call the parables of human life: "A certain man had two sons . . ."; "What man of you, having an hundred sheep . . ."; "There was a certain rich man which had a steward. . . ."

(3) Even more significant as bringing out the connection of the First Gospel with the past history of the Jews, is the frequent reference in it to *Old Testament prophecy*. In chap. ii. alone, for example, no fewer than four facts are mentioned as the fulfilment of events long since foretold; while altogether in the Gospel there are said to be sixty-five quotations from the Old Testament, nearly three times more than in any other Gospel.

It may be quite true that in some of these instances the application of the prophecy is, from our point of view, rather remote, and that we cannot help feeling that it was the fact that suggested the prophecy, rather than the prophecy that created the fact (see *e.g.* ii. 15, 17, 23; iv. 14); while, in other instances, there is even observable a disposition to alter the prophecy in order to make it correspond more exactly with some event in the life of Jesus (see *e.g.* iii. 3, xxi. 4, xxvii. 9). But this only brings out more clearly the general attitude of the writer's own

mind to link the whole course of his Lord's earthly history with that older Dispensation, which, as Jesus Himself had said, He "*came not to destroy, but to fulfil*" (v. 17).

(4) The point is so important for a proper understanding of the whole conception of Christ as He is here presented to us, that it may be well to illustrate it further in one particular instance.

No one can read the second part of the prophecies of Isaiah attentively, without being struck by the prominence there given to a figure who is described as the servant of Jehovah, or the servant of the Lord, whose career, generally speaking, falls into three stages. In the first stage the *prophetic* aspect of his office is prominent; in the second, he is rather the *martyr* servant, face to face with suffering and death; while, in the third, an *atoning* significance is added to the thought of his sufferings. And without entering just now on the vexed question as to who in the first instance is thus thought of, the interesting point for us is that these same three stages meet us in the Matthæan account of the mission of Jesus. Thus in chap. xii. 18-21, we find the evangelist falling back on the very words of Isaiah xlii. 1-4, to bring the Saviour before us as the true *Prophet*, the divinely appointed Messenger of God, making known the justice and righteousness of God. And then how clearly, in common with the other Synoptists, does he indicate the beginning of

the *martyr* stage in Christ's ministry, when he tells us that "*from that time began Jesus to shew unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up*" (St Matt. xvi. 21 and parallels). While once more it is to St Matthew alone that we owe the preservation of the two words in which our Lord Himself declared the *atoning* value of these sufferings: "*The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many*" (xx. 28); "*For this is My blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins*" (xxvi. 28)—words which, however they may be interpreted, find their closest parallel in the prophetic announcement of the suffering and yet triumphant servant of the Lord.

(5) There are many other points which might be mentioned as establishing the organic connection which, in St Matthew's mind, existed between the old covenant and the new; but space forbids, and we can only conclude by repeating that, notwithstanding the generally Jewish atmosphere that colours his work, the first evangelist never lost sight of the *wider* aspects of the Saviour's mission. Thus if he alone has preserved the charge to the Apostles, "*Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*" (x. 5), it is to him

again we owe such evident proofs of the universal character of Christ's work as are afforded by the visit of the Magi (ii. 1-12), the healing of the Syrophœnician woman's daughter (xv. 21-28), and the great parting commission, "*Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations*" (xxviii. 19).

Nor must we forget that if Matthew, in accordance with his immediate purpose, embodies the blessings of Christ's rule under figures derived from the older theocracy, he emphasises as strongly as any of the other evangelists the essentially *spiritual* character of that rule. If it was a "*kingdom*" that Jesus had come to set up, it was a kingdom "*of heaven*," and only those whose dispositions were in keeping with such a kingdom could hope to find a place in it (v. 3-12): while from those who had proved themselves unworthy the kingdom would be taken away, and "*given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*" (xxi. 43; cf. viii. 11, 12).

NOTE.—It is not possible to assign an exact date to the First Gospel, but it probably reached its present form about 68-69 A.D. If so, the "detachment" with which the writer regards the troublous times through which the Jewish nation was then passing, makes it unlikely that he was actually located in Palestine at the time. He may, perhaps, have been living in S. Syria (see Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible:* Art. "Matthew, Gospel of").

THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

II.

ST MARK

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

ST MARK

I.

The Life of St Mark.

THERE can be no doubt that the second evangelist is to be identified with the John Mark of whom we read in the Book of Acts (xii. 12, 25; xv. 37, 39), his ordinary name John being accompanied, as was frequent among the Jews, by a surname, Mark, for use among the Gentiles. His mother, Mary, was a member of the Christian community at Jerusalem, and was evidently a woman of some importance there. It has even been conjectured that it was the "upper room" in her house that witnessed the celebration of the Last Supper, and the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. If so, Mark may have been the man bearing the pitcher of water, whom our Lord bade His disciples follow when they went to prepare for the Passover-feast (Luke xxii. 10 ff.); and there is an even greater probability that we are to see in him the young man who followed Jesus at the

time of His betrayal with hasty zeal, and afterwards fled with equal precipitancy (Mark xiv. 51 f.). The incident at least is in entire keeping with all that we learn elsewhere regarding the character of the future evangelist, and it is interesting to notice that he alone records it, as if he were drawing from his own recollections, and not from the tradition common to all the Gospels.

We are, however, on surer ground when we pass to notice Mark's connection with Paul and Barnabas. As the cousin of the latter (Col. iv. 10), he was early associated with the ministry of both (Acts xii. 25), and on the occasion of their first missionary journey was chosen to accompany them "*as their attendant*" (Acts xiii. 5). It was evidently personal service rather than official assistance in the work that was specially intended. And the point is not without importance as helping to explain Mark's desertion at Perga (xiii. 13), or at any rate to place it in a less reprehensible light. For he "was not," as Professor Ramsay has shown, "essential to the mission," nor had he been "selected" for it by the Spirit. He was only a kind of "extra hand," and when he found the Apostles departing from their original scheme, and carrying the work into a new and different region than had been contemplated by the Church, he might well think himself entitled to leave them and return to Jerusalem.* Barnabas

* *St Paul the Traveller*, pp. 71, 90.

at least seems to have found no serious fault with his young relative's conduct, for on the occasion of the second missionary journey he again proposed to Paul to take Mark with them as their companion (Acts xv. 37). And though Paul would not at the time agree to this, with the immediate result of a serious breach with Barnabas, he too learned to forget and forgive.

It was during the apostle's Roman imprisonment that this occurred, and the completeness of the sympathy then established between the two men is shown by Paul's grateful recollection of Mark's loyalty at a time when he had few friends left, and his emphatic description of his former attendant as now a "*fellow-worker unto the kingdom of God*" (Col. iv. 10 f.; *cf.* Philemon 24). After Paul's release Mark would seem to have returned to the East; but how much Paul had learned to cling to him, is proved by the fact that when again imprisoned he sent a special message to Timothy, bidding him "pick up" Mark and bring him with him to Rome, adding as a reason "*for he is useful to me for ministering*" (2 Tim. iv. 11), words which, as Dr Swete observes, "assign to Mark his precise place in the history of the Apostolic age." *

* *The Gospel according to St Mark*, p. xv.

II.

St Mark and St Peter.

Only once again is Mark mentioned in the New Testament. In his first epistle Peter sent to the churches in Asia the salutation of "*Mark my son*" (v. 13), and the last two words have been understood as proving that Mark along with his mother actually owed his conversion to the Christian faith to Peter. But the phrase used points rather to a relationship of a more general kind, and may be simply "the affectionate designation of a former pupil . . . who had come to look upon his mother's old friend and teacher as a second father, and to render to him the offices of filial piety" (Swete). In any case there can be no doubt that for a considerable period Mark was associated with Peter in active Christian work, and further, that it was largely from information supplied by him that he afterwards compiled the Second Gospel.

On this latter point the testimony of tradition is singularly constant and trustworthy. Thus we find Papias stating on the authority of one John the Elder: "Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down what he remembered, accurately, though not in order, of the things said and done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor had he been in His company, but at a later date, as I said,

in the company of Peter, who adapted his teaching to the occasion, and not as though he were putting together a record of the sayings of the Lord: so that Mark did no wrong in setting down some things as he remembered them; for he was careful of one thing, not to omit anything of what he had heard, or falsify it in any particular" (Eus., *H.E.*, iii. 39).

With this description, it will be at once admitted, our present Gospel in the main agrees. For it is evidently not an exhaustive biography of the Lord, but a collection of incidents loosely strung together. And even though there are undoubted traces that the evangelist did follow a well-considered order of his own—an order which was subsequently adopted by the other evangelists—that need not have necessarily corresponded with the particular standard or order which the informant of Papias had set up.

Apart, moreover, from these general considerations, there are not a few points that may be gathered from the Gospel itself that go to substantiate the closeness of its dependence upon Peter. Thus we may notice that it embraces exactly that period of Christ's history which, as we learn from other sources, Peter thought important—"*beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us*" (Acts i. 22; *cf.* x. 37-41). Nor is it without significance that it is to Mark alone that we are indebted for the express mention of Peter's name on certain interesting occasions in the Lord's history

(see *e.g.* i. 36, xi. 21, xiii. 3, xvi. 7); while other incidents, which might be thought to redound specially to the apostle's honour, are modestly passed over; as, for example, the designation of him as the rock-apostle (Matt. xvi. 17 f.), the miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 24 ff.), and the special prayer that his faith might not fail (Luke xxii. 31 f.).

Taken separately, indeed, such incidental facts may not seem to amount to much, but when combined, and considered in the light of what we have seen to be the ancient Church tradition, they are surely sufficient to show that in the writing of his Gospel Mark had, at least, the benefit of Peter's knowledge and advice. Himself not an apostle, nor even an immediate follower of Jesus while He was upon earth, Mark naturally fell back on the help of one who, from his place in the inmost circle of the chosen band, could supply him with that first-hand information, which could alone lend authority and trustworthiness to his narrative, and which afterwards made it so invaluable to the other evangelists in the preparation of their Gospels.

For there is now general agreement amongst scholars that St Mark's was the earliest Gospel. It would take us altogether beyond our present limits to give the proof of this at length, but one point may be mentioned. Mark supplies the common outline or order of events both for Matthew and Luke.

Not, indeed, that either of them follows his lead rigidly; but where the one deserts it, the other, as a rule, will be found to be following it, so that "on the whole it may be said, that while, by assuming the order of St Mark, we can explain the order of St Matthew and St Luke, we cannot, in like manner, take either St Matthew or St Luke as a key to the two remaining narratives"*

III

Date, Place of Writing, and Characteristics of St Mark's Gospel.

As to the exact date of Mark's Gospel, all that need be said is that it can hardly be placed later than the Destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, in view of the general nature of the eschatological references in chap. xiii., while in accordance with tradition it must have been written after Peter's arrival in Rome, and in all probability after his death in A.D. 67 or 68.

The same tradition fixes Rome as the place of writing. And there are not a few traces in the Gospel itself that it was intended primarily for Gentiles, perhaps Roman Christians. Thus Jewish customs and usages, with which Gentiles might not be familiar, are carefully explained (see *e.g.* ii. 18; vii. 3; xiv. 12; xv. 6, 42), and Hebrew words and phrases

* Sanday, *Book by Book*, p. 387.

translated (*e.g.* iii. 17, v. 41, vii. 11); while a tendency on the part of the writer to use Latin words and idioms, such as *denarius*, *centurion*, *legion*, has often been remarked upon. It is, too, at least an interesting indirect corroboration of the Roman origin of the Gospel to find mention in chap. xv. 21 of "*Alexander and Rufus*," if, as is often held, the latter is to be identified with the person who is saluted in Rom. xvi. 13.

It is time, however, that we were turning from these general considerations to notice one or two of the more special characteristics of the Gospel.

(1) In doing so, we remark, in the first place, that it is *the gospel of action.* St Matthew's Gospel is largely occupied, as we have seen, with the record of the teaching of Jesus: St Mark, on the other hand, records His works rather than His words. With the exception of the eschatological discourse in chap. xiii., he narrates no long discourses, and only four parables; whereas he describes no fewer than eighteen miracles, one half, that is, of the whole number recorded in the Gospels. Or, to put it in another way, the calculation has been made that of St Matthew's narrative one-fourth is occupied with action, of St Luke's one-third, and of St Mark's one-half.

Equally characteristic too of the Second Gospel is the *rapid, forcible* manner in which this action is represented as taking place, as shown, for example, by the frequent occurrence of the Greek word that

is variously translated "straightway," "immediately," "forthwith," and the evangelist's studied preference for the present tense in his narrative, as if the whole scene in its living reality were rising up before him (*e.g.* ii. 3-10; xv. 20-24).

(2) Closely related to this is *the vivid, pictorial character of the Gospel.* In sharp clear outline, by a few vigorous touches, Mark depicts for us the varied scenes through which Christ passes, supplying us with not a few graphic details which but for him would have been lost. Thus he alone tells us that during the storm Jesus "was in the stern, *asleep on the cushion*" (iv. 38); that at the feeding of the five thousand He commanded all to sit down "*by companies* upon the *green* grass" (vi. 39); that when walking on the sea Jesus "*would have passed by*" His disciples (vi. 48); that at the Transfiguration "*His garments became glistering, exceeding white*" (ix. 3); that at the healing of Bartimæus, the blind man "*casting away his garment, sprang up*," and came to Jesus (x. 50); and that it was "*over against the temple*," in full view therefore of the doomed buildings, that Jesus delivered His great prophecy (xiii. 3).

Characteristic too of Mark is the manner in which he draws attention to the *effect* that the Saviour's acts had upon those who witnessed them, as in that graphic verse in the first chapter, "*And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? a new teaching! with*

authority He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him" (ver. 27), and the still more striking description of the awe excited in the minds of the Twelve, as the Saviour set His face for the last time towards Jerusalem, "*And Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid*" (x. 32). It was as if already some premonition of the impending disaster had come home to their minds, and a glimpse had been vouchsafed to them into the Saviour's awful "majesty of sorrow."

(3) All this too is in entire keeping with what we have already seen to be the leading *conception of Christ* in Mark's Gospel. It is as "the lion of the tribe of Judah" that He is here brought before us, and on every page we find traces of His Divine power and wisdom. "He knows precisely what is passing in men's minds and hearts, and the circumstances of their lives (ii. 5, 8; viii. 17; ix. 3 f.; xii. 15, 44); He foresees and foretells the future, whether His own (viii. 31, 38) or that of individual men (x. 39, xiv. 27) and communities (xiii. 1 ff.); in the most trying situations He manifests absolute wisdom and self-adaptation; even in His death He extorts from a Roman centurion the acknowledgment that He was a supernatural person (xv. 39)" (Swete).

And yet along with this the Saviour's real humanity is never lost sight of, as when we read of His being "*grieved*" (iii. 5), or "*moved with indignation*" (x. 14),

or when we discover that He required *sleep* (iv. 38), or could *hunger* (xi. 12).

But it is impossible to go on multiplying instances. Enough that throughout the whole of his vivid narrative St Mark brings before us One who is at once man and more than man, "the supreme Son of man and the only Son of God," so that, as has been well pointed out, the feeling which fills our minds, as we close the last page of his Gospel, finds fitting expression in the familiar lines—

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

. . . . . .

"Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine."

THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

III.

ST LUKE

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

ST LUKE

I.

The Life of St Luke.

THERE can be little or no doubt that the evangelist Luke is to be identified with Luke, the beloved physician, and one of the companions of St Paul, and equally little doubt as to the identity of the author of the Third Gospel with the author of the Acts. In neither, however, of his works does the writer *name* himself, and all the knowledge regarding Luke that we can gather comes from three passages in the Pauline Epistles (Col. iv. 14; Philemon 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11), and from what are generally known as the "we" sections of the Acts. The first of these passages by distinguishing between the greetings of Luke and certain others, and the greetings of those "*who are of the circumcision*" (Col. iv. 11), makes it clear that, unlike all the other writers of the New Testament, Luke was a Gentile by birth—according to tradition he was a Syrian of Antioch—and further that he had at one time followed the profession of a physician.

It is not impossible, indeed, that it was owing to his medical knowledge that Luke first attached himself to Paul, on the eve of the latter's departure from Troas to Europe (Acts xvi. 10). For without going the length of recognising in him the real man of Macedonia, whom the apostle saw in vision summoning him to this new enterprise,* what more natural than that Luke on finding that he could minister to Paul's bodily relief, should determine to accompany him on a journey which to him, as a Gentile, must have seemed fraught with such momentous consequences? In any case, a bond of intercourse was at this time formed between the two men, which was henceforth to be of the closest and most enduring kind. For though on Paul's departure from Philippi, Luke was left behind, perhaps to establish and confirm the work that had been begun (Acts xvii. 1), he rejoined Paul upon his return there on the Third Missionary Journey (Acts xx. 5), and, so far as we know, did not again leave him. He certainly shared with the apostle his first and second imprisonments at Rome, for it is during the first of these that we find Paul sending the greeting from him already referred to (Col. iv. 14; *cf.* Philemon 24), and it is during the second that his constancy is rewarded with the noble tribute: "*Only Luke is with me*" (2 Tim. iv. 11).

It is impossible to discuss at length here the influ-

* See Ramsay, *St Paul the Traveller*, p. 203.

ence which in consequence Paul must have exerted over his faithful companion. But when we think of what it must have meant to Luke to have been with Paul at Philippi, at Miletus, at Jerusalem, at Cæsarea: to have stood with him before Felix and Festus and Agrippa: to have braved with him the perils of the voyage to Rome, the tedium of a Roman imprisonment, and the uncertainty of a Roman trial: and finally, can we doubt, to have been a sorrowing spectator when on the Roman Campagna the great Apostle of the Gentiles gave up his life to the executioner's sword—can we wonder that this long friendship should have borne fruit, not only in the historical sections of the Acts, but in the whole spirit and conception of the Third Gospel? For his material Luke might be dependent on eye-witnesses, and on previously written narratives, but the whole *tone* of his writing, the stress which in a more marked degree than his predecessors he laid on the gracious and universal aspects of Christianity—all that he owed to the man who in the fine phrase of an old Latin father was his true "illuminator."*

Regarding the outward details of Luke's life after Paul's death nothing is known with certainty, and little reliance can be placed on the traditions that have gathered round him. The most interesting of these is the old legend that represents him as a painter, and which has led to his being chosen as the

* Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, iv. 2.

patron-saint of so many academies of art. Certain very ancient pictures, notably a Madonna in the Church of S. Maria Maggiore at Rome, are actually claimed as his workmanship. But his influence over Christian art is placed on a surer footing, when we remember how readily painters, both in early and mediæval times, selected their subjects from the scenes depicted in the pages both of his Gospel and of the Acts. As a modern poet has sung:

> "Give honour unto Luke, evangelist,
> For he it was (the ancient legends say)
> Who first taught Art to fold her hands and pray." *

II.

The Place of Writing and Date of St Luke's Gospel.

Many places have been claimed as the possible scene of the writing of the Third Gospel, but there is no evidence for or against any one of them. While, as regards date, we must be content with assigning it to some year between 75 and 80 A.D. It cannot well have been much earlier, for, unlike the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, it bears traces of having been written *after*, rather than *before*, the great catastrophe of 70 A.D. Nor, on the other hand, does there seem

* Rossetti.

to be any justification for placing it later than 80 A.D. Luke, as a careful historian, would desire to write while the impressions he had derived from eye-witnesses and others were still fresh in his mind. And there is further a general agreement among scholars, that if his Gospel had not appeared until the close of the first century, it would have shown marked differences both in form and in the use of certain theological terms.

III.

The General Character of the Gospel.

Passing now to the Gospel itself, we are in the fortunate position of finding a Preface attached to it, which states very clearly why and how it was written. The evangelist, so he tells us, had found in existence a number of narratives, embracing the main facts of Christ's life, as these had been handed down by oral tradition. With these narratives in themselves, he had no fault to find; but they were manifestly inadequate for those who desired a full and detailed account of the Saviour's ministry. That account he found himself in a position to give, having first carefully investigated all the facts from the very beginning, and so he wrote his Gospel setting forth in order the evangelic tradition.

This Gospel he addressed, as the Preface further

tells us, to a certain "most excellent Theophilus." Who this Theophilus was, we do not know. From the fact that his name means literally "dear to God," some have thought that it is an ideal or imaginary name, and that Luke intended it simply as a designation for all lovers of God. But it is more probable that Theophilus was a real person, as we find the epithet assigned to him used elsewhere in addressing high Roman officials (see Acts xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3, xxvi. 25). This does not, however, preclude the possibility of Luke's having had also a wider circle of readers in view, and especially, we may say, of Gentile readers. For while, Matthew wrote principally from a Jewish standpoint, and consequently his Gospel would find most favour amongst the Jews; and Mark was thinking apparently, in the first instance, of the Christians of the West; Luke, as a Gentile, presented the story of the Saviour's life in the way most likely to commend it to Gentiles.

Of this there are many proofs. Thus, not to dwell upon his explanations of Jewish customs, and of the geography of Palestine which would be necessary for readers who were not themselves Jews, how often do we find him recording words and deeds which would be of special interest to the Gentile nations of the world. He alone preserves the prophecy of Simeon regarding the infant Christ, that He was come "*a light for revelation to the*

Gentiles," as well as "*the glory of God's people Israel*" (ii. 32): he alone adds to the Baptist's warning message the words, "*and all flesh shall see the salvation of God*" (iii. 6): he alone introduces the Saviour's references to Elijah dwelling with the widow in the heathen city of Zarephath, and to Elisha cleansing the Syrian Naaman (iv. 26, 27): and he alone, in recording Christ's parable of the fig tree, represents Him as saying not only "*Behold the fig tree*" (*cf.* Matt. xxiv. 32; Mark xiii. 28), a favourite emblem of the Jewish people, but "*Behold the fig tree, and all the trees*" (xxi. 29). Everywhere, in short, it is Christ as the desire of all nations, the Saviour of the world, who is brought before us, and it is upon the universal character of His mission, as the gracious and pitiful Son of man, that the main stress is laid.

IV.

St Luke's Conception of the Person and Work of Christ.

(1) In none of the other Gospels is the *human side of our Lord's Person* so prominent. Thus it is to Luke that we owe many of the most interesting details regarding the birth and infancy of Jesus, such as the annunciation, the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, the message to the shepherds, and

the presentation in the Temple. He again it is who alone breaks the silence of the first thirty years by the description of the Boy Christ's visit to Jerusalem and His meeting with the doctors (ii. 41-51), nor does he even hesitate to ascribe to Jesus a perfect human development, as he tells us that He "*advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men*" (ii. 52).

There is, too, throughout the whole Gospel more frequent reference than elsewhere to the human *feelings* of our Lord. The often repeated mention of the *prayers* of Jesus is in itself evidence of this. On at least nine separate occasions, apart from the giving of the Lord's Prayer, which was intended rather for the disciples' use, we are told how our Lord prayed—the most important of these being at His Baptism, before the calling of the twelve Apostles at His Transfiguration; on the Cross for His murderers; and with His last breath. So real was the earthly Redeemer's dependence upon God: so complete His resignation to His heavenly Father's will.

(2) Nor is the humanity of our Lord less prominent in *the character of the mission* that Luke ascribes to Him. That is above all else a mission of grace, a coming "*to seek and to save that which was lost*" (xix. 10). Thus it is very significant that the evangelist who, in the early part of his Gospel at any rate, follows closely the order of Mark, in one

signal instance departs from it, and *antedates* Christ's preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth, that in "*the words of grace*" there spoken, he may have a fitting frontispiece for his whole Gospel (Luke iv. 16 ff.; *cf.* Mark vi. 1 ff.) And it is to the same cause that we may ascribe the preservation by Luke of such stories as those of the woman that was a sinner (vii. 36-50), of Zaccheus (xix. 1-10), and of the penitent thief (xxiii. 39-43); of such parables as the good Samaritan (x. 25-37), the Pharisee and the publican (xviii. 9-14), and the lost son (xv. 11-32); and the further fact that of the six miracles which are peculiar to him, no fewer than five are miracles of healing (vii. 11-17; xiii. 11-17; xiv. 1-6; xvii. 12-19; xxii. 50, 51). Nor can we fail to notice the *tender touches* with which his account of Christ's miracles as a whole abound, as when to the description of the healing of Jaïrus's daughter which he shares with the other Synoptists, he adds the significant remark that she was "*an only daughter, about twelve years of age*" (viii. 42).

(3) There are various other particulars regarding Luke's Gospel that have often been noticed as illustrating still further its *large-heartedness* and *width of human sympathy.* (*a*) Thus it is peculiarly the gospel of *womanhood.* Here alone do we read of the humble band of women from Galilee who ministered to the Lord (viii. 1-3), or of the Saviour consoling "the daughters of Jerusalem" who followed

Him on the way to Calvary (xxiii. 28). Widows, in particular, are remembered by Luke. Had it not been for him, we would not have heard of Anna in the Temple, "a widow, even for fourscore and four years" (ii. 37), or of the widow of Nain, following her only son's body to the grave (vii. 11-15), or of the importunate widow in the parable (xviii. 1-8). (*b*) The *poor*, in like manner, have a large place in Luke's interest, as is shown, for example, by the slight but significant change in his record of the first beatitude. "Blessed are the poor *in spirit*" is Matthew's version (v. 3): "Blessed are ye poor" is the version according to Luke (vi. 20). While, in like manner, it is to him alone that we owe the parables of the Great Supper, with its invitation to "the poor, and maimed, and blind, and lame" (xiv. 7-24), and of Dives and Lazarus, in which it was "the beggar" who was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom (xvi. 19-31). (*c*) It is, however, needless to say, *the spiritually needy, the sinful, and the outcast*, whom Luke specially represents as the objects of the Saviour's compassion. We have had evidence of this already, and it is unnecessary to dwell upon it further, beyond remarking how completely it corresponds with the emblem of the ox which the early Church ascribed to Luke. For what emblem could bring out better the priestly and mediatorial office of the Saviour as He is here depicted? It is as "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people" that His coming is heralded

(ii. 10): it is with the charge that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem," that the story of His earthly ministry is closed (xxiv. 47).

(4) It is impossible to carry this inquiry further. Had space permitted, it might not have been without interest to comment on some of the more outward features of Luke's Gospel, such as its historical accuracy, the purity of the evangelist's own style, and the literary skill displayed in the arrangement of the materials. But these points, after all, are of little account as compared with its loving, gracious, sympathetic heart. Luke is the most evangelic of all the evangelists. He it is, as Dante remarked long ago, who describes most fully "the meekness and gentleness of Christ"; * or, in the words of the poet of the *Christian Year*—

> "Whose joy is, to the wandering sheep
> To tell of the great Shepherd's love;
> To learn of mourners while they weep
> The music that makes mirth above;
>
> "Who makes the Saviour all his theme,
> The Gospel all his pride and praise."

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* *De Monarchia*, i. 16.

THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

IV.

ST JOHN

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

ST JOHN

I.

The Life of St John.

THE fourth evangelist was the son, apparently the younger son, as (with one or two exceptions in the Lucan writings) he is always mentioned after his brother James, of Zebedee and Salome. Of his father Zebedee we know very little. He was a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, but evidently in easy circumstances, for we read of his "hired servants" (Mark i. 20), and John himself, in later days, seems to have possessed property of his own in Jerusalem (John xix. 27). Of Salome we know more. There is every reason to believe that she was a sister of Mary, the mother of the Lord (*cf.* John xix. 25, with Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40), so that between the Master and His loved disciple there was the bond of human kinship as well as of spiritual fellowship. St Mark mentions Salome as one of the women who, when Jesus was in Galilee, "followed Him, and ministered unto Him" (Mark xv. 40, 41),

and we hear of her again as one of the little band who came to the sepulchre to anoint the Saviour's body (Mark xvi. 1). But the incident in her life by which she will always be principally remembered is her request to Jesus, that her two sons should sit, one on His right hand, and one on His left hand, in His kingdom (Matt. xx. 20 ff.). It is usually regarded as the request of a grasping ambition, but is it not rather the request of an earnest, though mistaken, faith? Salome was evidently a woman of force and determination, and, notwithstanding the sufferings and death He had just spoken of, was so assured of the Saviour's future triumph, that with a mother's natural instinct, she resolved to lose no chance of seeking to advance her sons' interests. Had it been otherwise, how could Jesus have replied in words which, while condemning her error, recognised the good mingled with it?

When first we hear of John, it is as the disciple of the Baptist (John i. 35), and we can easily understand how the Baptist's glowing message would leave a powerful impression upon the warm, impulsive temperament of his young disciple. But there was One greater than the Baptist, who was to call forth all the deepest love of John's heart. Listen to his own simple account of how he first met Jesus: "*Again on the morrow John [the Baptist] was standing, and two of his disciples; and he looked upon Jesus as He walked, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God! And*

the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus" (John i. 35-37). One of these two disciples, we know, was John, and from that moment he was the devoted follower and friend of Christ. He was one of the chosen three who were present with Him at the raising of Jaïrus's daughter, at the Transfiguration, and at the Agony in the Garden. And even amongst them he was specially favoured—"more elect than the elect." He stood with Christ in the judgment-hall: he was present at the Cross, and there received from Jesus, as His dying charge, the care of His mother, Mary: on the Resurrection morning he outran even his eager associate, Peter, and "came first to the sepulchre": and later, at the Sea of Tiberias, he was the first, with the quick eye of love, to recognise his Lord upon the shore, though to Peter it was given to be the first to rejoin Jesus.

After the Ascension, John remained at Jerusalem, later he was sent to Samaria with Peter, and then again we find him at Jerusalem, where St Paul describes him as one of the "pillars" of the Church (Gal. ii. 9). From Jerusalem, probably shortly before its destruction, he went to Ephesus, where, according to tradition, he became bishop of the Church. From Ephesus he was banished to Patmos "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. i. 9); but apparently was permitted to return to Ephesus, where he died in extreme old age, about the close of the first century.

Every one knows the beautiful story of his farewell to the Ephesian brethren; how, too old to walk, he was borne in the arms of his disciples into the midst of their assembly, and repeated again and again the same saying, "Little children, love one another." And when asked why he said this, and nothing else, he replied, "Because this is our Lord's command, and if you fulfil this, nothing else is needed."

There could hardly have been a more fitting close to the beloved Apostle's life, or one that reveals to us more clearly his inmost spirit. The disciple "*whom Jesus loved*" was the disciple who loved his Master with the most perfect simplicity and trust, and in Him loved his fellow-men. There was a great deal of the little child about the great Apostle. He who penetrated more deeply than any other of Christ's followers into the mysteries of the Divine kingdom, did so through the child-heart and the child-spirit. And yet receptive and clinging as John was, he had all the intensity of a deep and strong nature. He was a true "*son of thunder*" (Mark iii. 17; *cf.* Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 54). And of him we might say, as has been said of Dante, that he

> "loved well because he hated,
> Hated wickedness that hinders loving." *

* R. Browning, *One Word More.*

II.

The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

When, then, we turn to the Fourth Gospel, we do so under the assurance, that if the other evangelists have given us memoirs, accounts of the outward events in the life of Jesus, we shall find here the deepest insight into His inmost character and being. But then, at the very outset, we are met with the inquiry, *Is the Fourth Gospel after all the work of the Apostle John?* There are few questions of biblical criticism, as is well known, which have been more keenly debated, and even yet, notwithstanding all the labour that has been bestowed upon it, there is very far from being general agreement on the point. At the same time, the general trend of more positive scholarship may all be said to be in the direction of confirming the Johannine authorship; while, it is reassuring to find so independent a writer as Dr Drummond, after the most careful and exhaustive inquiry, coming to the conclusion that the arguments against the reputed authorship have been found wanting, even though he does not admit the historical character of the narrative.* But these, after all, are points which it is impossible to discuss here with any hope of profit for the general reader. And I must be

* *The Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel* (London, 1903).

content with merely indicating a line of argument in support of the traditional view, which any one interested in these questions can easily work out in detail for himself.

Thus it can be proved from the Gospel itself, that whoever wrote it was unquestionably a *Jew*—then that he was a *Jew of Palestine*—then that he was an *eye-witness* of what he describes—and then, if an eye-witness and a disciple of Jesus, that he must have been either Peter, or James, or John. He was not Peter, for Peter is expressly mentioned in the Gospel, and clearly distinguished from "the disciple whom Jesus loved," who claims to have written the book. He was not James, for James was put to death by Herod long before the date when the Gospel can have been written. He must, therefore, have been *John*.*

III.

The Object of St John's Gospel.

Assuming then on these and other grounds which cannot be further specified at present, that in the Fourth Gospel we have the authentic work of the Apostle John, we proceed next to ask, What was his *object* in writing it? Here fortunately we are

* See this worked out in detail by Drs Milligan and Moulton in their Introduction to the Fourth Gospel, in Schaff's *Popular Commentary*.

left in no doubt. John has stated it for us himself: "*Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name*" (xx. 30, 31). Or in other words, out of the many "*signs*" in the life of Jesus the Apostle has made a selection with a twofold purpose—(1) to show that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the fulfiller of Israel's hopes, and also the Son of God, the fulfiller of the destiny of mankind; and (2) to lead His disciples to a stronger faith, and consequently a deeper and more spiritual life in Him. The book is thus not so much a biography as a gospel, written to illustrate and enforce certain truths which the Apostle had realised in his own experience, and which he felt to be all-essential for the future life of the Church.

IV.

The Plan of St John's Gospel.

We are not astonished therefore to find in the Fourth Gospel clear traces of a distinct Plan carefully worked out, the main outlines of which may serve as a key to the general character of its contents.

(*a*) It begins with a PROLOGUE (i. 1-18), which contains a summary of the whole Gospel, as it

carries us back to the thought of the Word in His absolute, uncreated Being.

(*b*) This is immediately followed by the PRESENTATION OF JESUS ON THE FIELD OF HUMAN HISTORY (i. 19-ii. 11)—a presentation accompanied by the threefold *witness* of the Baptist—of the Disciples—and of Signs.

(*c*) Passing now beyond the circle of the disciples we find JESUS ENTERING ON HIS WORK IN THE WORLD (ii. 12-iv. 54). He appears first of all in Jerusalem, but having been rejected there by the religious heads of the nation, He turns in consequence to individuals. Three pictures follow of the manner in which this work is accomplished—the first in *Judæa*, in the case of Nicodemus: the second in *Samaria*, in the case of the woman of Samaria: the third in *Galilee*, in the case of the believing nobleman.

(*d*) Jesus then returns to Jerusalem, and the main part of the Gospel—THE CONFLICT WITH THE WORLD begins (v. 1-xii. 50). Jesus appears as the Son of God, the Son of man, the Light and the Life of man. Those who believe are drawn ever closer to Him: the unbelieving are repelled, until at the end of chap. xii. the condemnation of the Jews is sealed: "*He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day*" (v. 48).

(*e*) The next division shows to us THE SELF-

REVELATION OF JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES. The world is for the time shut out, and the Master pours out His inmost soul to His own in those wonderful discourses of love, and peace, and joy, which St John alone has preserved (xiii.-xvii.).

(*f*) They are followed by the STORY OF THE PASSION (xviii.-xx.). The world appears *now* to be victorious, but it is in appearance only. The Resurrection follows upon the Crucifixion, and the Redeemer, who has passed through death to life, is shown in the act of drawing all men to Himself.

(*g*) It is with a note of triumph therefore that the Gospel closes. In chap. xxi.—THE EPILOGUE—we have a glimpse given us of the spread of the Church, and of the success of all true labour in the Lord; while in the typical cases of St Peter and St John the duty of witness-bearing, alike through active work and through patient waiting, is laid upon Christ's disciples for all time to come.*

V.

Characteristics of the St John's Gospel.

1. Its STYLE. Nothing can exceed the simplicity with which the Gospel is written. The sentences are as a rule very short, and one often grows out of the other by the repetition of some leading word. Thus

* See further Milligan and Moulton, *ut supra*.

in the Prologue we read: "In Him was *life*; and the *life* was the *light* of men. And the *light* shineth in the *darkness*; and the *darkness* apprehended it not" (i. 4, 5). How direct too and emphatic the narrative is! Take a single instance: "Some of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, said, This is of a truth the prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee?" (vii. 40, 41). And yet with all this simplicity and directness, the Gospel as a whole leaves upon the mind of the reader the impression of an inexhaustible depth of truth, which, however obvious it may sound to the ear, has ever new treasures to reveal to those who "*will*" to obey it in the path of Christian experience (vii. 17).

2. Its SYMBOLISM. The miracles of Christ, for example, are to the evangelist far more than mere works of power or of wonder: they are, according to his own designation, "*signs*," manifesting forth the glory of Jesus, revealing some particular aspect of His character or mission. Thus in the inaugural sign (ii. 1-11) we are shown the transforming and ennobling influence of Christ's power, as it is exerted amidst the joys and the difficulties of life. Two signs of healing follow, the first wrought in response to mediative (iv. 43-54), the second in response to personal faith (v. 1-18). And these again are succeeded by other two signs in which the Lord shows Himself as the Giver of sustenance (vi. 1-14)

and of protection (vi. 15-21) to His people. While the mystical number of seven signs is made up by the revelation of the Saviour as the Light (ix. 1-7) and as the Life (xi.) of the world. A concluding and eighth sign follows in the Epilogue, in which the Risen Redeemer appears in the joy of successful and accomplished work (xxi. 1-14).

3. Its CHARACTERS. "The gradual self-revelation of Christ," says Dr Westcott, "which is recorded in St John's Gospel, carries with it of necessity the revelation of the characters of the men among whom He moved. This Gospel is therefore far richer in distinct personal types of unbelief and faith than the others."* And then he proceeds to illustrate this from the events of the Passion. Three chief actors meet us there displaying the three chief sources of hostility to Christ. "Blindness—the blindness which will not see—is consummated in the high-priest: weakness in the irresolute governor: selfishness in the traitor apostle." Nor, again, are the types of faith less distinct, as when we are shown faith overcoming the prejudice of learning in Nicodemus, and the prejudice of ignorance in the woman of Samaria. While, once more, how instructive is the contrast drawn between the two apostles, whose full faith was only reached through doubt—Philip who "believed without confidence"; Thomas who "believed without hope."

* *The Gospel of St John*, p. lxxi. ff.

4. There are many other features of St John's Gospel which might be mentioned, but want of space forbids. And I must simply close by reiterating that in this Gospel we have the most complete portraiture of the DIVINE CHARACTER OF THE LORD. St Matthew may present Him in relation to the past as the long-expected Messiah; St Mark in relation to the present in all the fulness of His living power; St Luke in relation to the future as the universal Son of Man; but to St John it was left to rise above all hum n relationships and to exhibit the Lord in His eternal being, the everlasting Son of God. Like the eagle, his appointed emblem, the evangelist is always soaring above earth and gazing upon the mysteries of heaven. His Gospel is an "echo of the older gospels in the upper choirs."

"Is it for nothing"

—so the dying John has been finely depicted as saying—

"we grow old and weak,
We whom God loves? When pain ends, gain ends too.
To me, that story—ay, that Life and Death
Of which I wrote 'it was'—to me, it is;
—Is, here and now: I apprehend nought else."*

* R. Browning, *A Death in the Desert.*

HEROD THE GREAT

By Rev. T. RHONDDA WILLIAMS

HEROD THE GREAT

HEROD I., known as Herod the Great, is scarcely a biblical character. His historical career lies between the two testaments, and in the New Testament the part he plays is legendary. A legend, however, has a historical value of its own. Why did legends of kindness grow round the name of Francis of Assisi? Because kindness was a great trait in his character. The after-growth of legend in the case of Jesus could not have portrayed Him as cruel. Why? Because history would not allow it. A legend might perhaps be described as history running wild. The wildness destroys the sobriety of fact, but the history determines the direction of the run. It was so with Herod. If we knew nothing of him but what is contained in Matt. ii., what sort of character would we take him to be?

1. Very jealous of any possible rivalry. He is portrayed as "*troubled*," because certain men inquired of the birthplace of an infant whom, they believed, was destined to be King of the Jews.

2. Very diplomatic upon occasion, diplomatic to

the point of hypocrisy. He professed he too would go and worship the "*young child*"!

3. Very cruel if thwarted in diplomacy. "*Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time when he had diligently enquired of the wise men.*" The story cannot be taken as true in the ordinary sense. There is no evidence elsewhere of a massacre of infants by Herod. There is no certainty that Jesus was born in his reign. Herod died in the year 4 B.C., and we cannot be sure that our chronology is wrong to the extent necessary to bring the birth of Jesus within the reign, nor indeed is it likely that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Everything points to Nazareth as his home, and most likely his birthplace. Luke's narrative has not a word about the flight to Egypt, and allows no time for it. Jesus is presented publicly in the Temple, and the parents remain forty days where Herod could have easily caught them. When they have fulfilled the obligations of the Jewish law they go back to their own city, Nazareth. There is no possibility of harmonising the accounts of Matthew and Luke. And there is but one way of accounting for Matthew's story, and that is by the theory that it arose after the establishment of the belief that Jesus was the Messiah, when it was felt necessary to find in his

history a fulfilment of texts which were at the time regarded as Messianic.

He must be born in Bethlehem to satisfy Micah v. 2, though in reality Micah v., if read through, will be found of impossible application to Jesus. He must come out of Egypt, because Hosea had said, "*Out of Egypt have I called my son*" (and, therefore, he must be got into Egypt), though the prophet really was speaking of the nation, not of any individual; and of a past not of a future event. We may be shocked at this way of writing history, but we must not apply our standards to the Jews of the first and second centuries. Our sense of historic veracity is comparatively modern; the ancient world did not know it. To give an effective presentation of an idea or a theory was the purpose—the historic sense was not violated because it was not there, and there was, therefore, no conscious deception or fraud. The writer of Matt. ii. believed that those Old Testament texts were Messianic, he believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and that, therefore, he must have been born in Bethlehem, and also called out of Egypt, and he quite sincerely imagined how it took place. He did not find it easy. When the angel in Egypt told Joseph that Herod was dead, and requested him to return to the land of Israel, there was the difficulty that Jesus was known at the time of writing as "Jesus of Nazareth," and if his parents settled down in the old home, that could not be accounted for. So

before reaching home, Joseph hears that Herod's son is reigning in his stead, and he fears; and in a dream he is warned of God to go to Galilee, and thus he came "*to a city called Nazareth.*" It is curious that the angel in Egypt was not sufficiently well-informed, that Joseph did not find it practicable to act upon his advice, because Herod the son was no improvement upon the father, and that God improved upon the first counsel by a second. It is evident we are not in the realm of history. In a story of this kind, therefore, it would be impossible, without other evidence, to attribute to Herod the massacre of the innocents.

Nevertheless, it is singularly striking that the main traits in his character are faithfully given in the legend. It is only just to Herod to say that the portrait is not adequate; but it must be conceded after making all allowance for his good works, and deducting something which may be due to Jewish hatred in the records we have of him, that he was very jealous, diplomatic sometimes to the point of dishonest profession, and ruthless in cruelty—just the kind of man about whom such a legend as Matt. ii. might naturally grow. Herod became Governor of Galilee in 47 B.C., and ten years later King of Judea. He had a very troubled time as Governor of Galilee; he had to fight for the throne of Judea; and it took him twelve years after that before his power was triumphant over his enemies. He was a strong

Roman Imperialist. His jealousy and unscrupulous cruelty are manifest in his policy. He put to death all the members of the Jewish Council except two: he murdered all who survived of the old Hasmonean dynasty, never suffering possible rivals: to this policy his own wife was surrendered, and even her sons were strangled. There are many domestic tragedies in the history of kings of olden time, but there is no more bloodstained story than Herod's. Mommsen gives the house of Herod the sorry pre-eminence for bloody feuds. He had many foes within and without his own household, but he was a man of determined will, and of no scruples as to the means of attaining it.

As to his governmental policy, one of the best authorities says: "He was governing for the Romans a part of the empire, and he was bound to spread Western customs and language and civilisation among his subjects, and fit them for their position in the Roman world. Above all, the prime requirement was that he must maintain peace and order; the Romans knew well that no civilising process could go on so long as disorder and disturbance and insecurity remained in the country. Herod's duty was to keep the peace and naturalise the Græco-Roman civilisation in Palestine"—(Ramsay, quoted by Usener). It must be admitted that this was no easy task, and that only a man of very strong will could have any chance of accomplishing it. The

intense nationality of the Jews, as manifested in the Maccabean movement, the story of which was now enshrined in the stirring Book of Daniel, was by no means dead, and a ruler of imperialist policy would have to count with it, sometimes at great cost. Herod had some Jewish blood in his veins, and could, no doubt, understand Jewish prejudices. In many respects he seems to have dealt with much consideration towards the Jews, and to have shown a conciliatory spirit. Whether that was for the sake of the Jews, or for the sake of his position in the Roman Government, whose policy was tolerant towards nationalities, it is impossible to say. But he did secure the Jews exemption from military service, and he built them their great temple. No doubt at first many of them would look upon such a scheme by such a man as sacrilege, but Herod tactfully let the priests build the actual sanctuary, and he himself never defiled it with his own presence. He began the building in 19 B.C., and the work brought the main buildings to completion in ten years, though the whole was not quite finished until 63 A.D.—a few years before its total destruction. Herod built a temple, the most magnificent temple in the world! Because he worshipped the God of the Jews? No. Because he wished to help the Jews in their worship, and to develop their own religion? We fear not. Some would unhesitatingly say Herod built the Temple for his own glorification.

But the judgment might be too severe. Character is never simple, motive is never single, and it would be easy to be unjust.

We may admit that Herod had a love for beautiful buildings, which in itself is a good thing. He not only built fortresses for defence, and harbours for trade—doing the useful; but he built temples, not only a temple for the Jews but temples for the emperor and many palaces, and he made them beautiful. He also rebuilt ruined towers and cities. A love of beautiful architecture must be conceded as an element of good in Herod, and if this was mixed up with the love of fame, let him that is without sin amongst us cast the first stone. In our cities to-day, we should be glad to replace the jerry-builder who sacrifices soundness and beauty to money by a few Herods, who would give us substantial and beautiful buildings because they loved to have them so, even if personal fame were an element in their motive. Herod showed some care for the public health too, in the provision of public baths.

He also developed the amusement side of life. He was a lover of games, and he liked to see the people interested in games, as well as celebrating the honour of the emperor. Accordingly, he built places of amusement, even in Jerusalem! No doubt a certain type of Jewish character would denounce this as badness, but we cannot consider it altogether bad. In the Maccabean revolt all the right was not

on the side of the Maccabees, nor all the wrong on the side of the Greeks. There was value in Greek ideas and customs, and in the Greek sense of beauty and joy, which the narrowest Jewish party did not appreciate. That same type would no doubt carry their condemnation of Herod for developing games and other amusements farther than we can.

Another element of good in Herod was his liberality. We read of his remitting taxes on more than one occasion. And, if Josephus can be trusted, he celebrated the year in which his throne became secure, the year 25 B.C., by converting his own plate into coin, in order to be able to buy corn from Egypt to relieve people who were suffering from famine! In the year of his success, in the time of his triumph, this looks like generous self-denial. It is difficult to fit it into our conception of Herod, yet we must not forget the subliminal self! In a character normally bad, sometimes there is a rush of something totally different, as if a flood had burst in the depths. No man entirely belongs to badness.

Again, Herod was capable of remorse, if not of repentance. It is said that he became almost mad with sorrow after the execution of his wife. And though this did not prevent him from afterwards strangling her sons, still it did show a man who had a better nature, and whose better nature at times asserted itself.

All men are mixtures, but most men, perhaps all

men, have a predominant line of character. Herod was certainly a great mixture. Generosity and jealousy; munificence and selfishness; conciliation and relentless cruelty, strangely commingle. He was not as bad as he was painted; but he was bad. Nature had her revenge upon her indulgent undisciplined son. Herod died of a loathsome disease brought on by his manner of life.

He is a picture of a sad actuality, with a brilliant might-have-been for a background. If only the good impulses had been taken as revelation-points of the possible! as flashlights of God upon the potentialities of the man! as moments in which God was saying, "That is thy way, go thou in it!" In the good points we catch a glimpse of the Herod that was in the mind of God. Many a Christian impulse came to the birth in Herod's soul, but we fear the forces of evil conspired to kill the holy babe. If Herod had nursed, and cherished, and fed it, it would have grown to be a saviour in his life, and he might have come down to posterity laden with honour instead of dishonour, to brighten instead of darkening the pages of history.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

By Rev. J. G. GREENHOUGH, M.A.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men thorugh him might believe."—ST JOHN i. 6, 7.

WE have been told by one whose authority is beyond question, that there has never been a greater prophet than John the Baptist. And yet there is hardly a prominent prophet of the Bible who does not occupy a larger place in our religious thoughts. He is rarely mentioned in our Christian teaching. The preacher hardly ever selects him as a subject of discourse. He is just dismissed into the shady background of the gospel story, and virtually forgotten. And perhaps it is right that it should be so, and it was certainly inevitable. He himself expected it—declared it. He came for the very purpose of calling the world's attention to another, and when he had done that, his work was finished, and he disappeared from the stage. The herald who comes to announce the king, passes out of sight when the king appears. The star of first magnitude is lost to view when the morning dawns, and even

the splendour of the moon pales out and vanishes as soon as the sun has risen in his strength. John was too near to Jesus, in point of time, to take a prominent place in religious history. The Divine One over-shadowed and eclipsed him, and he was well content to have it so.

And yet when I think of this man and the various things which are said of him, I almost fall in love with him, and feel that he hardly deserved to be so generally forgotten. His ministry and teachings, so far as they are recorded, lacked the tender notes which make the ministry of Jesus inimitably lovely. We miss the pathetic pleadings, the compassionate warnings, the forgiving pities, and the yearning sighs and love tears, which are so abounding in the gospel story. John is nearer akin to the fire and whirlwind of Elijah, than to the gentleness and the motherly touches of the Son of Man. There was more of Sinai than of Calvary in his preaching, too much of denunciation and pictures of a wrath to come, and perhaps too little sympathy with the brighter and happier side of human life, and such preaching as that could never have made a lasting impression on the world. It appealed chiefly to the lower motives of fear; and fear, though it restrains and sobers a man for the moment, effects no radical and lasting change. The nation was aroused, agitated, violently moved for a little while, and then fell back into its former state of indifference and godlessness.

Yet the man himself is always worth looking at. He was of heroic build, with a certain rude and rugged splendour, and his life was a short brilliant romance, ending in pathetic tragedy. His ministry can hardly have lasted more than twelve months—twelve months of thrilling passion, fervour, and intensity, in which his words swept through the land like a whirlwind, in which he swayed the multitude like a reed shaken with the wind. Twelve months and then it was all over. The great heart was chained down in a lonely prison, and the soul of fire quenched in martyrdom.

I think of John, first, as the Master saw him; and then as he saw himself; and finally, as the people testified of him; these are three views of the man which may have some suggestion for us.

I.

The Witness of Jesus.

Jesus spoke of John as "*a burning and a shining light*": shining because burning. A great many people shine, or try to shine, in whom there is little or no inward burning. It is all polish, plausibility, outward show, superficial cleverness, bidding for admiration, intellectual craft and cunning, laying itself out to catch applause, and to win that ephemeral,

fickle thing called popularity. We have plenty of men to-day who shine with the short, vivid shining which comes of cleverness without convictions. Men who write, and speak, and preach, with an eye on the gallery and the crowd, always making a stage show of themselves, tuning their voices and shaping their attitudes to suit the tastes and fashions of the multitude, and speaking the thing that will pay, sell, please, and command the rapturous support of the market. There is shining enough of a showy sort, and a readiness to sacrifice every higher thing for the sake of the shining. But the fire within is wanting. The fire of intense belief. The fire of a mighty faith. The fire of a noble purpose. The fire of a fearless spirit. The fire which God only can kindle.

That was what our Lord saw in this prophet. He was "*a burning and a shining light.*" The soul of the man was a furnace, hot with zeal for God, with zeal for justice and right, with stern hatred of sin and all sin's doings. The word of God was like a fire burning in his bones, and it flamed out in clear piercing lightning, like words telling men what they were and what God would have them be. There was a tremendous honesty in the man, and a sublime fearlessness, which marched straight forward regardless of consequences. He respected no persons; wherever he saw wrong-doing, he lashed it. The pharisees and hypocrites writhed under his stinging

wrath. Kings trembled under his rebukes. Soldiers and publicans, great people and lowly people, were sternly reminded of their misdoings. Wealth was solemnly warned of its responsibilities, and the poor found in him no flatterer. Not a sinner in the land heard smooth words. It was a voice that called for justice and mercy, and the fear of a sin-hating God, and the voice of one, who, because he feared God himself, feared nothing else.

It could not last long. A burning of this kind provoked too much fury, and made too many enemies. A voice so cutting and so unsparing was sure to be silenced in martyrdom. And it was too fierce a burning. It needed much the softer light which came from Jesus' face. Yet if we had a little more of this burning to-day, it might be better for all of us. We have half-forgotten that there was some of it in Jesus Himself. We have hidden His wrath behind His gentleness, and lost sight of it. Yet in Him also, underneath the fountain of tears and pity, there was the furnace fire that raged against sin, and the terrible honesty which flattered no men, but told them all the grim, unlovely truth. There is a call for that side of His message to-day. There is room for prophets of the Baptist kind who will not sell their pens and voices to gain favour and a brief shining, but will speak to all men whatever it costs, the thing that is right and just and true. He was "*a burning and a shining light.*"

II.

The Testimony of John concerning Himself.

John spoke of himself not perhaps with bated breath and whispered humbleness as Shakespeare puts it, for no good man has any excuse for doing that, but he spoke of himself with a profound humility. He was the most self-retiring of all the prophets, and his greatness was in the fact that he disclaimed all title to greatness. What art thou, the people asked of him, and he answered: nothing at all, but a voice —the voice of one crying in the wilderness; nothing at all but a finger-post to point men to the way of repentance; nothing at all but a messenger to prepare you for the coming of the King. He was almost eager to efface himself as soon as the greater One appeared. I am no light at all, He is the light. He is preferred before me, for He was before me. I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes. I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me. "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*"

Of course, it was all perfectly true. We who now see the full glory and majesty of our Lord's divinity, read all these self-depreciatory words as if they were just, proper, and becoming. Yet there was a beautiful magnanimity in the utterance at that time. John had occupied the whole stage. He had been the idol of the crowd; the great hero; the man with the

name to conjure with; followed, and for the time almost worshipped as God-sent, and as the possible Messiah. And lo! Jesus came and pushed him out of all that. His very disciples forsook him to follow the new prophet, the multitude deserted him to hear another voice and enjoy a new excitement. And his day was over. He knew it was the right thing, and quietly accepted it without a murmur or a thought of envy, content to fill a little place—to fill no place at all—that the greater One might be glorified. "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*"

But it was only a great, true, noble spirit that could have been capable of such self-effacement. It is good to behold such a man in these days when we are all tempted by little and great ambitions, when most of us are anxious to be first if it be any way possible, and take with an ill grace the second, third, and lower places. It is so hard to confess without envy that others are cleverer than ourselves and worthier than ourselves—so hard to see them preferred before us, and acknowledge without the least grudge that they deserve the preference. So hard to lose ourselves in a cause greater than ourselves, and to sacrifice all our egotism and our love of praise on the altar of a pure and self-forgetting devotion. It is hard even to worship God unless we can be somehow of importance in doing it, and hard for some of us to preach Christ without calling a little flattering attention to ourselves. And perhaps the hardest thing of all is

to bear with sweet patience what comes to all of us more or less in time. We get a little superseded as we grow older. We get put on the shelf to make place for younger men. The favour which we enjoyed is transferred to others. The crowns of honour which we won are laid on other heads. The fashion which worshipped us turns round and pays its vows at other shrines, and sometimes the very love we gained is given to people who deserve it more or may be not quite so much. Yet these things are inevitable. For every one has his day, and then the evening comes, and other lights appear.

And we all need some of that grace which made this prophet great—that noble self-forgetting which rejoiced in the exaltation of another, which did its appointed work and then modestly stepped aside, that a mightier and diviner worker might be all in all. "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*" What does it matter about the insignificant I, so long as God's work is carried on by worthier hands.

III.

The Testimony of the People concerning John.

This was what they said when his course was finished and they looked back upon his work and words: "*John did no miracle: but all things that John*

spake of this Man were true." Perhaps there was the least trace of disparagement in the first part. He did no miracle; they had asked him for miracles, and he had disappointed them. He was simply a voice, and had never pretended to be a wonder-worker. But now as they thought of the voice that was silent, the real weight and meaning of the message and the purpose of his life were unfolded to them. "*John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this Man were true.*" And, I think, the prophet himself could not have asked for any other or better testimony than that. It was what he came for and what he lived for; not to show himself, but to glorify another; not to be a light, but to bear witness of the light that all men through him might believe, and it was enough if he had so spoken and so lived as to turn men's eyes and thoughts to the Son of God and Saviour. All that he said of this Man was true.

I wish that we might all have that witness given of our lives. Far better that than to have wrought miracles and created sensations. Far better that than to dazzle the world by cleverness and genius, by intellectual displays, flights of oratory, or prodigious successes in business. There are not many of us who give any promise of these things. We are not likely to make the world come running after us by anything of the startling and miraculous kind. We are far too much on the average level to set a town on fire or have our names shouted from the house-

tops, but by the Spirit of God and the might of patient prayer we may so live and speak that all our work will be showing Christ to men. We may be witnesses of Him whose every word goes home, and rings with the very music of His tones, and I would rather have this said than find my name enrolled in the biggest book of fame:

"He did no great work; but all that he said of Jesus was true."

ANDREW

By Rev. J. G. GREENHOUGH, M.A.

ANDREW

"He first findeth his own brother Simon."—ST JOHN i. 41.

THE disciple Andrew does not play a conspicuous part in the gospel drama. We know him better than some of the other disciples, better than Bartholomew and Jude, but not nearly so well as Peter and John. He is one of the subordinate characters stepping on the stage here and there to do a bit of modest work, and then vanishing into the background. He does not appear to have had any particular gifts. He was not an eloquent preacher. He wrote no epistles, wrought no miracles, and founded no churches, so far as we know. He had none of the holy audacity of Peter, or the literary skill of Matthew, or the lofty genius of John. He was never in the foreground or regarded as a leader. We know him chiefly as the brother of Simon Peter. He is almost overshadowed and hidden by the superior energy and ability of James and John. These were the pillars of the early Church, while he was but one of its humbler stones, and yet the few things which are recorded of

him are invested with a fadeless beauty, and they speak to ordinary Christians with almost more force in the way of example than the inimitable doings of his greater fellow-apostles.

Most Christians feel that St Paul and St Peter are above their reach in heroic proportions and the vastness of their works, but men like Andrew are the one-talented men who use their one talent sweetly and nobly, and show us all the way we ought to go and the work which we can do.

According to the fourth Evangelist, Andrew and John were the first men who heard and responded to the Master's call, the first whom He enlisted in His little cohort of disciples. They had previously been followers of John the Baptist, but one day as Christ passed by they heard that stern prophet speak of Him as the Lamb of God, and they looked into His face and felt some wonderful attraction drawing them to Him, and all uninvited they followed and abode with Him one day. What Christ did with them and what He said on that day we know not, but it removed every doubt from their minds if any doubt had lingered there. It was a day of revelation, a day of grace, the most wonderful and the happiest day that these men had yet known, for they had found the Saviour of the world who was to make all the world new to them.

And then we have the simple and affecting incident recorded. Andrew had no sooner made his great

discovery, than he burned to impart the secret to others. And what better place to begin than at home. Simon and he had grown up together, shared each other's thoughts, talked together often about the coming of the Messiah, and it was right that this brother should be first made partaker of the joy. Quickly therefore he sought him and passed on the glad tidings—"Brother, I have found the Christ, come with me and let us follow Him together," and he brought him to Jesus, and from that hour they trod the higher path together. And now, taking the thoughts suggested here, let me say first—

I.

The Church was built and the Kingdom of Christ extended mainly by men like Andrew.

The real powers of the Church were not men who could harangue crowds or arouse congregations by their fervid appeals, but who could talk to a brother, a friend, a companion, a neighbour about the wonderful love and beauty of Jesus Christ, and out of the fulness of their own joys testify to those nearest them of the new life which they had found. It was in that way chiefly, and not by the orators of the Church that Christianity was spread in the early days. A man who had realised the blessedness of it passed it on to

the one next to him. It went like a forest fire, each tree kindled set fire to another. Each convert was as good as two, for each one made a second. The Christian plant, like every other, propagated itself; the flower of its joy dropped seed as it ripened into fruit. Prisoners whispered the glad secret to their gaolers, soldiers to their comrades, servants to their masters, women to every one who would listen. Each saved soul was eager to save another, eager to pluck a brand from the burning and win a jewel for Christ. So the work went on, so the army of the Lord grew, so the great Roman Empire was slowly subdued under the Cross, and Christianity made the ruling faith of the world.

Inspired Apostles had their part in it, great preachers like St Paul and Apollos, Bishops like Polycarp and Ignatius; but the bulk of the work was done by men and women of the Andrew type, who simply laid hold of the nearest friend or stranger and pulled them by gentle persuasion to the Saviour. And if the whole army of Christians were earnest enough to do that to-day, there are some standing here who would not taste of death until they saw a mighty coming of the Kingdom of God.

II.

When a man is truly and wholly converted to Christ, he shows it by bearing witness.

The day after Andrew's conversion was the day on which he became a soul-winner. The new-found life in Christ always longs to impart itself. The wonderful things which Christ whispers to a man in secret burn within him until he can tell them to other ears. When the pilgrim in Bunyan's story had been relieved of his burden as he knelt before the Cross his joy was so great that he wanted to tell it to the trees, and stars, and water-brooks, and birds; to breathe it out to everything and every one.

We are all like that when Christ's revelation first awakens us. We feel as if it were robbery to keep the joy to ourselves—we want to share it. It is a sort of wealth that increases by free distribution—the more we give the more we have. All the purest joys indeed are of this kind. They are not like the miser's sordid greed, or the ambitious man's delight in power which become less for them if others have part in them. All the highest joys we want to share with our fellow-men as soon as we find them. He who discovers a new truth wants at once to proclaim it to the world, the more people he can get to see and believe it the greater his joy. So when you are listening to some exquisite song, drinking in heavenly

harmonies you are glad to know that other ears are taking in the melody, and other hearts feeling the rapture. And when you are looking on some choice work of art, or gazing on a fair scene of nature, or reading some book of a master mind, you want others to have a share in your delight.

And this is above all things true of Christian joy. We are impatient to make others feel it. It cannot be hoarded. If we keep it all to ourselves it disappears, as if robbers had filched it away. A man hardly knows what it is to be forgiven of God and loved of Jesus Christ, unless his heart beats with desire to have the forgiveness and love brought within the reach of others. He wants the whole world to taste the riches of this grace. And not until all our Christian fervour cools down, and the name of Jesus has lost most of its charm, does this desire lose its intensity. We are always more or less like Andrew, anxious to bear our witness so long as Christ's power in us retains its vitality, strength, and blessedness.

III.

An earnest man finds his field of work close to him, waiting at his feet.

Andrew did not wait until the Master had given him full equipment and training, until the Master

had ordained him to be a preacher and apostle, and sent him out into the broad fields of Judea and Galilee missionising—that came afterwards—but before that came he first found his own brother Simon.

I meet with young men and young women who are ambitious to engage in missionary work or to enter the ministry. They are all on fire with the romance of missions; they want to go to those vast mysterious regions where multitudes sit in darkness, or to prove their preaching gifts before great audiences at home; and, meanwhile, they almost despise the humbler evangelical work which is waiting at their own doors. But the first proof that they are fit for the larger call is found in their willingness to answer the smaller and immediate call. If a man has not a passion for souls, the Lord will not send him anywhere, and if he has this passion it will glow and burn everywhere. Men who will not work for Christ until some great occasion comes, never really begin to work for Him at all. If your hearts are right, service will beckon to you at every step; you will not wait for some great thing to do, you will do what you can now with your friends and fellow-workmen—ay, and your own home.

Andrew commenced there in the family circle with the brother whom he loved. He did it almost instinctively—affection impelled him. He knew this brother, understood his nature, felt that there was the making in him of a brave disciple, and especially

could not bear to think that a deep, wide gulf should come between them ; that he should walk with Christ, and his brother be far off on the other side; that he should be enriched with this new divine treasure, and his brother remain poor. His heart went after Peter, and he brought him to Jesus.

Every zealous Christian wants to begin there. He wants to make his light shine as a witness there among his own kinsfolk. For these are, and must be more to us than others—the children, brethren, parents, husband, and wife. No one, whether young or old, can rejoice in the light and love of God without anxiety and intense desire to make every member of the home circle partner with him in these things. It is always painful to think that they are separated from us by a barrier of unbelief; that they who have so many dear things in common with us have no communion with us in the best and dearest thing of all. And every Christian who thinks seriously of this, finds it such a trouble to him that he cannot help bearing some sort of witness for Christ in the home. Never does he kneel in prayer without supplicating for the near and dear ones. He longs to have them persuaded. Oh, yes, and he will endeavour, God helping him, to make his whole life in the home a speaking witness for Christ—a gospel that utters itself either in words or without words—a gospel that shows itself in sympathy, forbearance, kindly actions, gentleness, cheerfulness, unselfishness.

Let us ask ourselves if we are doing this work for the Master at home. Are we praying for those about us, and proving the reality of our prayers by corresponding conduct? Are we in our daily life commending the grace of the Lord Jesus and proving that His power can control temper, and keep the tongue well governed, and infuse a spirit of service and self-forgetfulness into the very routine of common actions?

Alas, there are some Christians whose ordinary lives rather drive their kindred away from Christ than draw them. And they are so conscious, moreover, of the inconsistency between their professions and practice that it makes them dumb. They cannot say to their brother, sister, or child, Be Christian as we are. May God give us all the magnetic power of sweet Christian living, that we may draw those we love to Christ.

And whilst doing that work at home let us try to remember that the sphere about us is always a workshop for God's true workman. In a world where there is so much evil, so much religious indifference, so many who do not love God, one can hardly take a step, but he hears a call and finds some Christlike service inviting him. Wherever there is someone to pray for, someone to help, someone to teach, there is a field and place in which to gather grain for the Master, to realise the blessedness of well-doing, and to prepare for the Master's well-done in the evening time.

NATHANAEL

By Rev. ALFRED ROWLAND, D.D., LL.B.

NATHANAEL

NATHANAEL was one of the least distinguished of our Lord's apostles. Good and faithful servant though he doubtless was, he is little more than a name in the Church's history. Yet he was a beloved friend of Jesus Christ, who commended him for the simplicity and gentleness of his character. This should be an encouragement to those of us who are not endowed with exceptional gifts, and have no opportunities for brilliant service. The great Captain of our Salvation watches us constantly, and will reward as generously the most obscure private in the ranks of His army as the field-officer whose generalship is the admiration of the world.

This is suggested, not only by the comparative obscurity of Nathanael, but by the method of his calling to discipleship, which was the result of a quiet talk with his friend, Philip of Bethsaida. Indeed, all the first enlistments in the Church were due to private conversations rather than to public appeals from eloquent and learned men. Andrew, the village fisherman, having discovered the Messiah, at once

made the fact known to his own brother, Simon, and brought him to Jesus, little thinking that he was thus winning for the Christian Church one of its most distinguished leaders. Similarly, Philip, who had just been called by Jesus Himself, immediately went to Nathanael, who was like-minded in his expectation, and said, "we have found Him, come and see Him for yourself." Such work as that is not outside the range of any one's powers. There are none to whom it is impossible to speak of Christ to a comrade at school, or in the home, or in the business; and we must never neglect opportunities for doing this in our eager desire to discover occasions for more brilliant and effective service. Fidelity in this may have more far-reaching effect than we imagine. As the rough hand of a poor Kaffir picked up the first diamond discovered in South Africa, so the poorest and most illiterate may find and win those who shall be as a diadem in the hand of the Lord, in the day when He makes up His jewels.

In the New Testament Nathanael is never mentioned except in the Gospel of John, and there only on the occasions of his call, and of his comradeship with other apostles, as they went out fishing on the Sea of Tiberias, after our Lord's resurrection. But we may confidently identify him with Bartholomew, whose name is never mentioned by John, while that of Nathanael is omitted by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Possibly his full name

was "Nathanael Bartholomew," the son of Tholmai, just as Simon was called Bar-Jona, and Joses Barnabas. This conjecture is confirmed by the fact that as Nathanael is associated by John with Philip, so in each of the other Gospels Bartholomew is mentioned immediately after Philip, just as Andrew was associated with his brother Simon, and James with his brother John.

But quite independently of this conjectural identification of the two names, we may learn a good deal of Nathanael's character from the striking interview described so graphically in the first chapter of John's Gospel. In it this disciple appears as a noble example to all seekers after truth.

Most intelligent men are eager to assume that *e* in some sphere of thought. They spare no pains to discover the truth about disputed incidents in history, or to determine abstruse problems in natural science. If any country is unknown, men are ready to explore it, whether it lies among hostile tribes or in the most inhospitable climes. And to gain accurate or interesting information about passing events, newspaper editors will send out their correspondents regardless of cost.

No doubt all this is right and good, but the best of these discoveries pales in glory when compared with the truths of a Divine Revelation such as we have in Jesus Christ. It is possible for men to live happy and noble lives, as many of our forefathers did.

without any conception of those facts in science or in geography which we regard as among the triumphs of human research. But it profoundly affects character and destiny to know what we ourselves are, and may yet become; to learn the nature and results of sin, and how it may be pardoned and conquered; and above all to know God, whom to know is life everlasting, and to understand His disposition towards us, and His purposes concerning us. It was such knowledge as this which Nathanael had been seeking in the Old Testament Scriptures, in Rabbinical lore, and in his own consciousness, and it was this which he found in Christ Jesus, the teacher who came from God, the revealer and representative of the unseen Father, so that it was with exultant adoration he fell at His feet, exclaiming, "*Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel!*"

It may be well to discover the *characteristics of this successful seeker* after the highest truth. The most fundamental of these, which gave stability to all the others, was his absolute SINCERITY. This is an essential to every truth-seeker, whatever his sphere of research may be. Unhappily, students of Scripture are often surpassed by other investigators in the influence they allow to it. A scientific man would lose his reputation if he was so dominated by a preconceived theory as to ignore, or refuse to publish, facts which seemed in conflict with it. But above all others, Christ, the King of Truth, who said, "he

that is of the truth heareth My voice," demands openness of mind and transparency of character, for surely this is what He meant by saying, "*If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light.*"

Nathanael was commended by the Lord because he was an "*Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.*" He was not a guiltless man, but he was genuine, open-minded, straightforward, ready to acknowledge and embrace truth directly he saw it. His unflinching frankness was apparent throughout that memorable interview. It appeared in the bold question which honestly set forth his surprise, "*Whence knowest thou me?*" and it asserted itself equally in the absence of false modesty which led him tacitly to accept the Lord's commendation; for he knew himself to be honest and sincere, utterly free from guile.

Such ingenuousness is too rare, and amid the artificial conditions created by modern society, it is not easily maintained. It is natural to very little children, though far too quickly it becomes less manifest in them, for they are early tempted to pretend to be what they are not. But while it lasts (and it does happily remain for many years with some) it is singularly beautiful and divinely approved. Probably our Lord was thinking of it when He said, "*Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" In other words, we must abjure guile, self-deception, and unreality. We should constantly

pray for an honest and good heart, which affords the kindly soil into which the seed of the Kingdom may fall, not only with the hope but with the certainty of harvest.

The incident we are considering reveals Nathanael's EARNESTNESS as well as his sincerity. This had already asserted itself in his diligent study of the Jewish Scriptures. Philip only needed to speak about "*Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write*," for Nathanael to understand whom he had discovered. They were both so familiar with Scripture, and had so often talked over the nature of Messiah's worth and His personal characteristics, that they were ready to recognise Him directly He appeared.

The reverence felt by the Jews for their sacred writings verged on superstition, for they saw mysteries even in the positions and relations of the Hebrew words; but their knowledge puts to shame our ignorance of the Bible, especially in these days of general education and widespread reading. Some of our grandparents were wont to rise early enough to spend at least one hour each morning in meditation, prayer, and study of the Word; but now, magazines and newspapers absorb all the reading hours of multitudes of professing Christians, who live on the relics of what they once learned of the Bible at school, or as teachers when they prepared to teach their classes. But our morning prayer, "*Give us this*

day our daily bread," embraces the supply of spiritual nourishment, and this must be found largely in Holy Scripture; yet instead of turning to it daily for fresh supply, many are content with the mouldy crusts which were laid by in the storehouse of memory, in the days of a half-forgotten youth. No wonder spiritual strength decays in these modern Christians who have no idea of what Moses in the law and the prophets did write, nor even of the utterances of the Divine Master Himself.

It was the earnestness of Nathanael which impelled him to search the Scriptures, and it was this which also inspired him to renounce his former prejudices. His first exclamation on hearing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, was this, "*Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?*" It was a village which had never been distinguished in Hebrew literature or Jewish history. The prophets had alluded to Bethlehem, in which some striking incidents had occurred; but never a word had they uttered about Nazareth. Indeed it was a place of ill-repute, and the treatment which our Lord met with there, when He was cast out of the synagogue by the brutal men who meant to kill Him, shows that its bad name was not undeserved. But Nathanael was taught, what we are slow to learn, that national prejudice is often in the wrong. It proceeds on the common fallacy that because some people are bad, all must be. Thus we condemn Roman Catholics, as if they were all

outside the kingdom of God, though there have been, and still are, saints among them, because we justly repudiate the ecclesiastical system which has been proved by centuries of history to be contrary to the true welfare of men. Similarly we denounce scepticism, and the blatant blasphemy, the cynical sneers, sometimes directed against our adorable Master ought to arouse intense moral indignation; but this must not blind us to the fact that there are honest doubters whom our Lord regards lovingly, as He did Thomas Didymus. The Spirit of our Divine Master will endow us with broader sympathy and with the moral bravery which will fling aside our prejudices even when truth comes to us from an unexpected quarter; and those thus ruled will be ready to learn from preachers and books they once despised; and to see their Lord, as Nathanael did, where they least anticipated.

All earnest truth-seekers will gladly use whatever means are open to them; like this disciple who studied the Old Testament, listened to the pleading of Philip, and willingly went to see One against whom at first his prejudice was up in arms—with this result, that he found in the Man of Nazareth the Son of God and the King of Israel. Too many wait for extraordinary manifestations of what is divine, and meanwhile they fail to benefit by what is already within reach. They seem to expect a radiant angel to assure them of forgiveness, while

they neglect what God has already provided for their help, some friend of Jesus to whom they might open their heart, a church in which they might find inspiration, a Bible long unread, prayer seldom offered though God waits to answer it. We must not neglect such helps as these, nor shall we if with real earnestness we are seeking for wisdom as for hid treasure, like the gold-digger or the pearl-diver, who dares not shrink from toil and sacrifice.

Nathanael had been among the Lord's hidden ones. He was beloved and chosen before he was clearly conscious of it. Very significant and very solemn were the words of greeting which fell from the lips of Jesus: "*Before that Philip called thee, when thou was under the fig tree, I saw thee.*" That declaration has had different explanations. There is an ecclesiastical tradition to the effect that when Nathanael was a tiny child his mother hid him under a fig tree, and he thus escaped Herod's massacre of the babes of Bethlehem. But even if that tradition is true, it was not of an incident long since passed, of which Nathanael must have been unconscious, that our Lord spake. He evidently alluded to something which had occurred under the fig tree, which justified Him in uttering, and Nathanael in understanding the exclamation—"*Behold an Israelite indeed*"; and an "*Israelite*" would mean a spiritual descendant of Jacob, who was called Israel, because in prayer he

was as a Prince having power with God. It was as if Jesus said—"I judge thee from what I saw of thee under the fig tree just before Philip called thee"; and anyone familiar with Eastern customs, and with Scripture incidents will at once conjecture that Nathanael had resorted to the shade and quiet of the fig tree as Jesus did to the garden of Gethsemane, that he might meditate and pray. It was there that our Lord saw him, and was most glad to see him. He has ever been looking for such hidden ones; sending his angels to comfort Jacob at Bethel, and Elijah at Horeb, rejoicing over the seven thousand loyal to Him, though they were unnoticed by the world; and rewarding the half-informed devotion of Cornelius the Centurion, before the Christian Church was ready to recognise him. Many since those days have prayed to the Father who seeth in secret, and He has rewarded them openly; or they have wrestled with the angel till they have been able to sing—

> "I know Thee Saviour, who Thou art;
> Jesus, the feeble sinner's Friend!
> Nor wilt Thou with the night depart,
> But stay and love me to the end!
> Thy mercies never shall remove
> Thy Nature, and Thy Name, is Love!"

Nathanael was not the last to whom, in his secret hour of worship, the Lord has said: "Before that Philip called thee, before others understood thee, or thou didst understand thyself, I saw thee." From

the eyes of our fellows the beginnings of a new life are generally hidden. They are a secret even to ourselves; not because, like the source of the Nile before its discovery, they are inaccessible; but because they resemble the source of the Severn, which is lost in many little rills on the oozy slopes of Plinlimmon. Yearnings after God, sighs over one's sins, longings for a better life, hopes drawn heavenward by those who have passed within the veil; these, which are often the beginnings of a noble Christian life, may be unrecognised and unremembered by the one who experiences them, but they are all known to God.

The consciousness that all things are naked and open before Him will help to guard us against the beginnings of wrong, which are often subtle and secret. Occasionally a moral tragedy happens. A noble and well-sustained reputation suddenly collapses. But though reputation has fallen suddenly, as a cliff in the storm, character may have been long ago undermined by the wash and wear of evil imaginations unnoticed at the time. Therefore we must guard prayerfully the integrity of the inner life, watching constantly against the subtle dangers which God can reveal, because He sees them all. Well may minister and people unite in the brief, familiar prayer, "O God, make clean our hearts within us, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from us."

The experience of Nathanael has one other

suggestion for us. Personal religion is not always to be kept as a sacred secret between the soul and God. There is a time for praying under the fig tree; but there is also a time for the open and brave confession, "*Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God. Thou art the King of Israel!*" When a battle is raging, and victory still indeterminate hovers between the contending hosts, when men are falling fast, and the survivors can scarcely hold the ground already gained, a nation would cry "shame" on any cowards who skulked in the woods, and withheld from their comrades the aid sorely needed. And in these days when loyal comrades in the Church are dropping in the ranks; while impurity and drunkenness and religious indifference are defying the armies of God, there must be no shirking of responsibility on the part of any one who can add any strength to the cause of God. He who has secretly prayed under the fig tree is called upon openly to accept Christ as leader, like him who exclaimed, "*Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God. Thou art the King of Israel!*"

ST PETER

By Rev. Principal WALTER F. ADENEY, D.D.

ST PETER

"Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam."

THE visitor to Rome sees this sentence in gigantic golden letters written round the interior circuit of the dome of St Peter's. Below, in the nave, he observes a bronze statue, originally an image of Jupiter, now christened Peter, whither a stream of pilgrims is continually coming to kiss the projecting foot, which has been polished bright, and worn to a deformity by the lips of generations of devotees. The vast cathedral itself is said to stand on the spot where the prince of apostles was martyred. Its bishop, the Pope, claims to sit in Peter's chair as Peter's successor, from which he affects to rule all Christendom in virtue of the right conferred on the fisherman by Jesus Christ. While it has taken ages for this Petrine legend to grow up to its present monstrous proportions, in quite ancient times, as early as the second century of the Christian era, a considerable factitious import-

ance was attached to the name of the apostle, and a mass of literature was growing up on the pretence that he was its author or the hero of the achievements it celebrated. Thus we have the recently recovered fragments of the so-called Gospel and Apocalypse of Peter and references to "the Preaching of Peter" as another work ascribed to the apostle. Then those popular fictions of the early Church, the Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies*, have Peter for their hero, as a great travelling teacher directing the churches, and confuting the errors of false teachers. A Jewish Christian fancy was that Peter thus answered and humiliated Simon Magus, who followed him from place to place to hamper his work; but it is commonly supposed that the Samaritan magician is here meant to represent St Paul.

In the reaction, not from this old-world, long-forgotten popular use of the name of Peter, but from the Roman Catholic pretension, Protestants have been shy of giving much honour to Simon Peter, and thus this apostle has not had his due. For really he was the most prominent and important of all the Twelve. He took the lead among the disciples from the first; and he maintained it throughout in the older circle, though, owing to his unique relationship with Jesus, James the brother of the Lord was honoured with a higher formal status. In the outer region of missionary activity

he was only over-shadowed by the more potent personality of Paul. If it had not been for the marvellous genius and devotion of the apostle to the Gentiles—one of the half-dozen men of all history who have attained to the very pinnacle of human greatness — Peter would have to be recognised throughout as the chief follower and servant of Christ in the early Church. At the same time he is the apostle who most wins our sympathy in the way of human interest. He is so very human. We feel that he is

"not too good
For human nature's daily food."

Like Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress* he comes near to us in his failings. The immaculate person is like the holy place—taboo to the common mortal. We shrink from the frost of perfection. That icy peak is inaccessible, and the chill of its rare atmosphere distresses us. The man on the plain with us is our brother. To be as great as Peter was, and yet to have such glaring faults as his story reveals, attracts at once admiration and sympathy. This man is not merely a saint for a niche in the sanctuary; he blunders; he commits himself egregiously; yet he has a generous heart, a heroic soul, a noble enthusiasm. We recognise him as one of ourselves and yet, in many respects, far beyond us.

The portrait of St Peter is vividly represented in the New Testament, although it is nowhere painted

of set purpose. It comes out in the course of the story in the Gospels and Acts, bit by bit, with many a touch of human nature, but also many a flash of heaven-sent inspiration. It is a very individual character. There is none like it. There is no mistaking it. We know Simon Peter as we know scarcely any other Bible character. His nature is simple, unreserved, transparent. He is too impulsive to disguise his true self. We see the best in him—and the worst in him. This self-revelation of his worst qualities by an impetuous person leads to injustice. Secretive souls judging by their own habits assume that there must be more evil behind. Besides, what is flung upon the surface attracts attention. One or two faults thus glaringly exposed are remembered against a person for life; yet they may be by no means specimens of his normal character. At all events, the censor has no right to assume that other faults of a graver character lie behind or these would not be displayed so recklessly. There is no reason for that assumption. In the case of a frank, open nature, such as we see in St Peter, it is plainly false.

Simon Peter is the apostle who appears most often in the gospel story. It is generally taken for granted that this is owing to his irrepressible nature. But another reason may be found to account to some extent for this fact. Scholars are now fairly agreed in regarding Mark as the primary Gospel on which

the two other synoptics were based, and in accepting the statement of Papias that he derived his information from our apostle, being "the companion and interpreter of Peter." Thus we are brought to the conclusion that our synoptic Gospel record consists in the main of incidents and sayings that were remembered and repeated by Simon Peter. It is natural to suppose that he would remember best those scenes in which he took some part. Thus without any conscious egoism he would be bound to appear fairly often in the dialogue. He never lends an excuse for a charge that he made the boast "*quorum magna pars fui.*" He is as frank and open with stories to his own discredit as with those that do him honour. This proves him to be an honest reporter. Certain facts cannot be disguised. Peter was one of the earliest to attach themselves to Jesus; one of the earliest to be called and to leave all in order to follow Him. Not only was he one of the chosen Twelve; he was one of that inner group of the three most intimate friends who were permitted to accompany their Lord on certain occasions of singular interest, when even the remaining nine apostles were left behind—in the house of Jaïrus, on the Mount of Transfiguration, in the Garden of Agony. If a man so privileged undertook to give an account of the life of Christ, he could not help appearing fairly often in it. Nevertheless this does not entirely explain Peter's prominence in the Gospels. Evidently he was quite ready to come

forward as the spokesman of his companions, as well as eager to express himself and take his full share on whatever was going on.

Peter was one of the four fishermen who were our Lord's first diciples. Before he became a follower of the new Teacher he had been drawn out to the wilderness by the fame of John the Baptist. There he had joined the band of the penitents, and there his brother Andrew, guided by the Baptist, had brought him to Jesus. This is only recorded in the Fourth Gospel ; but it so far falls in with the accounts in the earlier Gospels as to supplement them, by explaining how it was the fishermen were so ready to leave all and follow Jesus at a word from Him. Their previous acquaintance with Him down by the Jordan, would have prepared them in some measure for His call. At the same time it did not mean that there and then they would have attached themselves to Him. They had taken a holiday in order to attend the revival-meetings. There they had been directed to a Man of a mysterious, marvellous destiny. They had visited Him and had some most interesting conversation with Him. But He was not then engaged on any mission Himself. Apparently He was a disciple, not a teacher — one of John's followers. The introduction was very impressive ; but it did not immediately lead to anything. Some time passed, several months, at least. Then Jesus in the course of His early ministry came down to Capernaum by

the shore of the Lake of Gennesaret. According to St John the fishers hailed from Bethsaida, a small town a few miles farther east. Perhaps this was their native place. But Jesus found them at Capernaum, the town which He made the centre of His work, the headquarters of His preaching-tours. It is not quite easy to piece together the accounts of the call of the four fishermen in the Synoptics. Was it after or before the cure of Peter's wife's mother? Was Peter called while casting his net, or after the wonderful draught of fishes? It is really impossible to settle these details. The important points, however, are clear enough. Peter was at his work when Jesus called him; that is plain. And he left it at once on a word from the Master; this also is clear. The prompt action would come more easily from the impetuous Peter than from a man of slow, brooding temper — Thomas, for instance. The brothers, James and John, seem to have been in some respect of a similar disposition—fiery souls, named "Sons of Thunder," they too were seized in a moment by the sudden spell of the great Teacher. We know less of the fourth fisherman, Peter's brother Andrew. But he was as ready as the others to go at a word. It was an amazing moment of high elation, one of those rare moments that do the work of years. Still, if we are to take the order of the narrative as it is given in St Luke's carefully prepared and more detailed account, we shall see that there had been a

special preparation. The great draught of fishes after a night of thankless waiting, secured when Jesus bid the tired toilers of sea let down their net—only recorded by St Luke—produced a tremendous impression on one of them. Peter was startled—even terrified. There was something eerie about it. How could this landsman, this carpenter from the highlands, know where the shoals of fish were to be found better than men who spent all their lives at the craft? Jesus had reached the man along the line of his own experience. It touched him to the quick. Who this strange Person was he could not say; but there seemed to be something superhuman about Him. He appeared to be a visitor from some higher, some holier sphere. The thought filled the poor fisherman with shame and confusion. He shrank from that holy Presence.

"*Depart from me*," he exclaimed, "*for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*" Do not let us set this exclamation down either to lack of faith or to the secret consciousness of exceptional guilt. It is more just to attribute it to exceptional keenness of consciousness in one of the most sensitive disciples of the wilderness-prophet of repentance. Publicans and sinners, persons of a confessedly low moral type, welcomed Jesus to their table without the least feeling of awkwardness. Their coarser conscience was not quick to perceive the enormous gulf that separated them from their new Friend. Is it not the case

to-day that the most self-humiliating penitents are not the greatest sinners? Augustine's conduct, previous to his conversion, would not have been reckoned outrageously wicked by contemporary fashion; and nothing in the early career of John Bunyan indicates that he had lived a downright vicious life. The later Cæsars and the later Stuarts were men of incomparably worse character than either of them. Nevertheless, Augustine's *Confessions* and Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* contain heart-broken utterances of penitence. It is not every man that, after denying his Master with oaths and curses, at a look would be so turned as to go out and weep bitterly. The apostle who was so suddenly awakened to a sorrowful consciousness of his unfaithfulness at the end of his companionship with Jesus on earth may well have been confounded at his first perception of the wonderful nature of the great Teacher.

Jesus does not take the humble man at his word. There is a way of driving Christ's presence from us; we can keep the door closed against Him; there are times when He makes as though He would go further, unless we constrain Him to abide with us. But on the present occasion the modesty that felt unworthy to be in the presence of Christ was taken by Him as a winsome grace drawing Him the closer to the fisherman. In course of time Peter would discover that Jesus was not in the habit of departing from sinful men, that He was their peculiar Friend, that He

came expressly to call such, and not the righteous. Peter's sudden confession did not horrify Jesus. He took the very opposite course to that which the trembling man had begged of Him. Instead of departing from Peter, Jesus bade Peter follow Him; and He offered the fisherman promotion in his craft. No longer casting his net for the finny creatures of the sea, he should become a fisher of men. So Peter became a constant attendant of the great Teacher, first as a disciple, then as an apostle, one of the twelve messengers sent out two and two, among the villages of Galilee, in preparation for that larger mission, begun also with a companion, John, but afterwards carried out independently over a wide field. In the two years of discipleship Peter was close by his Master's side, one of the inner group. He heard the wonderful words that dropped from the lips of Christ, saw His wonderful deeds, witnessed His more wonderful life. What impression did all this make on Peter?

The answer to that question appears in the crisis at Cæsarea Philippi. Jesus had then retired with a faithful remnant to the northern borders of Palestine, to what was in fact a pagan centre of fashion, by the temple of Pan, at one of the sources of the Jordan. The early popularity had vanished; the religious leaders had taken offence; and the general public was perplexed and disappointed. Then, after questioning the disciples as to what they have heard of popular

opinion about Him, Jesus suddenly asks them point-blank, "*Who do you say that I am?*" At once the answer leaps to Peter's lips. He was always the most ready to speech. Perhaps seniority gave him a recognised primacy among his companions. Or it may be that in this case, as later when first entering the empty tomb, he was the disciple who earliest dared to take a novel step. We cannot tell whether in any sense he was authorised to speak for the Twelve on this occasion, whether they had been conferring together, and had come to the conclusion that was expressed in Peter's confession, or whether he spoke altogether of his own initiative. Our Lord's answer would seem to imply the latter alternative. The great truth had not been revealed to this disciple by flesh and blood, not by any human agency. It had come as a revelation. God had opened his eyes to see it. Therefore, whether as yet Peter was the only one on earth to perceive this truth, or whether some at least of his fellow-disciples had also been led to see it, John for instance; he at least had his Master's assurance that it *was* a truth. This confession is given with some amplification in Luke, and more in Matthew; but in both these Gospels, as well as in Mark, our primitive Gospel, it has the essential statement, "*Thou art the Christ.*" What more Peter saw at this moment we can scarcely say. This, at least, he saw clearly, and declared unhesitatingly. Jesus, the Nazarene carpenter, the humble peasant, the lowly

man who accepts simple fare in simple homes, is the long-expected Messiah, the Redeemer and King of Israel. He had not yet claimed to be such. He had left His disciples to grow into the perception of the fact. And now one of them at least shows that he has grasped it and has no question about admitting it.

Jesus was delighted with the confession. In Matthew, though in this Gospel only, we have a remarkable saying, the saying which adorns the interior of the dome of St Peter's. "*Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church*," with more words, indicating the right to open the door of the kingdom, and to tell, like an authoritative rabbi, what is lawful and what is to be forbidden. This is not the place at which to enter on the discussion that has raged between Protestants and Romanists round these words. It must be admitted, however, that some of the arguments on both sides have not been valid. Thus it will not do to draw a distinction from the difference between *Petros* for Peter and *petra* a rock, as though the rock were not the same as Peter, but Christ; or Peter's confession, or the faith Peter displayed, or the truth which he had just uttered; for the simple reason that in Aramaic, the language used by Jesus Christ, one and the same term stands for each of these Greek words. Peter is the rock. Now, it is a historic fact that at Pentecost Peter was the originator of the missionary movement out of

which the Church came, and later in the house of Cornelius it was he who opened the door of the kingdom to the Gentile world. These simple facts may be admitted without conceding the immensely greater claims which have been put forward by the papacy on the authority of our Lord's words to Peter.

The sequel to the incident in which Peter was so greatly honoured, or rather the continuance of it, was about equally dishonouring to him. Immediately after being described as the rock on which the Church was to be built, Peter is addressed by his Master as Satan, and sternly told to betake himself out of sight. Elaborate attempts have been made to explain away the significance of the startling words. If we escape from the refinements of theology and consider them as they were struck out hot in the dramatic situation of the moment, they should not seem so difficult to understand. Jesus had followed His acceptance of the Messiahship by the first announcement of His approaching rejection and death. This was totally unexpected; it seemed to contradict and nullify what had just gone before. If Jesus was the Christ, He must be going to come out of His disguise of obscurity, lead Israel on to liberty, and sit on the throne of His father David. So Jews such as His disciples, who had been bred in the popular Messianic expectations of their race, would be certain to feel. What then is the meaning of these words about rejec-

tion, contempt, insult, death? To Peter they seem to come from an ultra self-renouncing spirit, the spirit he has often seen in his Master and hitherto always admired, now pushed to an extravagance which would undo all. So the ardent friend exclaims against it. Now the natural man shrinks from suffering and death. When Peter protested, he was appealing to our Lord's human nature, to the human dread of pain, to the natural horror of death. But such an appeal when it traverses the path of duty, is a temptation. Thus, while passing as his Lord's best friend, Peter was really acting as a tempter. Jesus perceived this at once; He felt the full force of the temptation; but He recognised its evil origin. In the voice of Peter He perceived the spirit of His arch-enemy. This was a satanic suggestion. For the moment Peter was to Christ the representative, the embodiment of Satan. This was no time for nice discrimination. We must not take refuge in the idea that in the first part of the speech Jesus is addressing the devil as one person, and in the second his disciple as another distinct personality. He addresses the man Peter whom He sees before Him; but in this man He discovers Satan, and therefore it is Satan whom He rebukes—Peter as Satan. That is indeed a humbling experience for the highly-honoured disciple. His hour of greatest elation is suddenly turned to deepest humiliation. Just after winning from his Master the most flattering words of commendation he has ever

received, he is lashed by the severest rebuke from the same source. It is a transition not unfrequently met with in experience. The descent from the pinnacle of spiritual exaltation to the very abyss, is swift and sharp; and elated souls would do well to be prepared for it.

The next important scene in the apostle's life is one of even sadder shame. But before we come to it we must glance at the feet-washing, only recorded by St John, but full of suggestive light on the characters of St Peter and his Master. Peter could not bear to think of Christ stooping to wash his feet. It is another instance of his too confident readiness to interfere with his Lord's plans. He is told that if he will not submit he can have no part in Christ. Thus even the acceptance of an honour, which one would wish to decline as beyond desert, is treated as an act of dutiful obedience. As soon as Peter sees this he rushes to the opposite extreme. If to have a share in Christ is conditioned by being washed by Christ, let this be complete. Peter is still conscious that he is a sinful man. He thinks he needs washing all over to be fit for the holy Presence. Our Lord's answer is, according to His custom, somewhat enigmatic, "*He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.*" This seems to mean that the Christian's penitence should not need to go to the root of the matter in everyday life. He often fails, he is never adequate. Not a day passes without its

weakness, its deject, its positive sin. Still, if the main course of the life is tending right, although these evils are not to be minimised, we need not regard them as signs of a total fall from grace. Cleansing is needed, daily cleansing—to our sorrow, we must admit it—but not repeated regeneration. The life consecrated to God and resting on Christ is directed heavenward in the main, notwithstanding these deplorable and quite inexcusable relapses. Such a life is Peter's. This should be remembered when we come to the next scene.

And now we have that most sad scene of the denial to estimate. Jesus warned His disciple. He told him that Satan desired to sift him as wheat, but that He had prayed for him; He even definitely predicted three successive acts of denial. This was all in vain. The poor, weak, foolish man rejected the warnings with indignation. He seemed to imagine that the vigour of his repudiation was an assurance of his security. He could not have made a greater mistake. His self-confidence was his undoing. It is easy to be wise after the event. We can see how dangerous it was for a man of Peter's disposition to venture into the High Priest's palace, and thus throw himself in the way of temptation. But it is plain that when he did so no thought of this temptation was in his mind. He simply could not have remembered his Lord's warning. The whole story plainly shows that he had clean forgotten it. Here was his initial mistake. It

Peter followed afar off.

was unbecoming not to have given more heed to the kind admonition. Unhappily people rarely will acknowledge the kindness of such an admonition. So they fling it off as an unpleasant suggestion, if not an impertinence. This being the case, when Peter followed close behind Jesus after His arrest in the garden, it was with no idea of bravado. The motive was simple affection, pure devotion. The others—except John—all forsook Him and fled. Peter did not share in his comrades' miserable panic. To blame his rashness is to commend their cowardice. Unless we can say that their conduct was the part of a just and reasonable prudence, we cannot blame Peter for not having followed it. It will not do to complain of this one apostle for doing the very thing, the failure to do which leads us to regard the other apostles as weak and selfish.

When Peter was in the palace court he was completely off his guard. Here was his second error. He even ventured to stand round the charcoal brazier where the attendants were gathered in the chill of night. It was the glow of the fire that revealed him to one who had seen him with Jesus. Thus it has been said, it was while Peter was warming himself that he denied his Master. At that moment, too much at ease, he was not so intent on the trial he had come to watch. Then he fell. Step by step he was led into deeper complications. He must have been simply frantic when he broke out in oaths and curses.

Assuredly he must have exposed himself by the very vehemence of his lying. He protested too much. But he was too unimportant a person for anybody to take him seriously one way or the other. The serious part of the whole sad business was his own conduct. This he saw in a moment when he caught the eye of Jesus. That moment the forgotten warning came back—too late. The cock-crow of which Jesus had spoken did not remind him. It was the look of Jesus that awoke the slumbering memory. It all came over him like an avalanche of penitence, and he went out and wept bitterly.

This pitiable experience prepares us to understand why Jesus appeared first to Peter after His resurrection. Next to the remorse of Judas, who could not endure to live any longer, must have been the sorrow of Peter. The worst of it was that it would seem too late to make any amends. The most bitter sorrow is the thought that we have been unkind to the dead. Peter must have been racked with torment as he thought of what that last mournful look of his Master meant. By an unspeakably wonderful mercy Peter obtained a release from this sorrow, which, with most who experience it, can never be fully removed. The first of the Twelve to see their risen Lord was Peter, in a private interview, no account of which has been preserved. It was the private reconciliation of the penitent servant with his Master.

After this, and after receiving the great gift at

Pentecost, Peter is another man. He preaches to the multitudes fearlessly. He defies the Council, though at the risk of his life. He carries the gospel into the region round about as the leading early missionary. He breaks with Jewish exclusiveness under the influence of his strange vision at Joppa. At Cæsarea he uses his key of the kingdom to open the door to the Roman centurion Cornelius, and so anticipates the work of Paul. Baur treated all this as unhistorical, as a mere imitation of Paul's mission, invented to suggest an agreement in ideas and methods between the two apostles, which the critic believed never existed. But the narrative in Galatians, which Baur allowed to be genuine, justly interpreted, is now seen to show that they were really friendly together. At Antioch Peter proved his liberality of sentiment by eating with Gentiles. When emissaries of the strict party at Jerusalem appeared he shrank back and followed this exclusive habit. This made Paul indignant, and the apostle to the Gentiles openly rebuked his temporising brother apostle. Some have thought Paul too harsh and censorious. Possibly Peter did seriously hesitate, did fear that he had gone too far in the warmth of his sympathy with the Greek Christians. Still it is impossible to exonerate him from some kind of weakness in this incident. He seems to have been of an impressionable nature to the end—always more or less moulded by the circumstances in which he

found himself. The compensating advantage enjoyed by such a nature is that it is saved from bigotry and is susceptible of growth. Peter shows this in three distinct stages of his view of the death of Christ. When Jesus first announced it as a coming event, he rejected it with horror; after our Lord's resurrection, in his preaching at Jerusalem he repeatedly referred to it as a necessity predicted by the prophets, determined in the counsels of God, and though a deep mystery, no hindrance to the Messiahship, since it issued in the Resurrection; finally, in his epistle (our "1 Peter") he treats it as an atoning sacrifice after the manner of Paul, of whose teaching and influence that document bears remarkable traces. But though thus plastic and sometimes weak, Peter could be true to his name, at least in his riper years. He stood like a rock before the High Priest and Council, when he said, "*Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard.*" There seems good reason for accepting the very ancient and widespread tradition that he suffered martyrdom at Rome.

NICODEMUS

By Rev. J. G. GREENHOUGH, M.A.

NICODEMUS

I DO not think that the common estimate of this man Nicodemus is altogether correct or just. He is almost always set forth in somewhat harsh and even condemnatory words, as the type of secret disciple, as a warning example of those who, through fear of man's censure or through some other kind of moral cowardice, hide their real religious convictions, and believe on Christ without confessing Him. But surely to view him in that light only is to leave half his story unread, and to miss, perhaps, the best features of his character. And one cannot help feeling that the Apostle John, who tells us all about the man that we know, regarded him with far more respect and affection than the majority of preachers and Christians have shown.

He was one of those men who are cautious rather than timid and cowardly, who move slowly but surely, who measure every step before they take it, but are not to be driven back when they have once decided—Christians whom it takes a long time to make, but who are true as gold and faithful unto death when

they are made. There are not a few in the Church of Christ to-day, and there have been not a few in the Church of every age, sternly honest and brave disciples at last, who have come to the Master's service in much the same way that Nicodemus trod.

Let us glance at three stages of the man's discipleship as we have them recorded. We shall find a life-story there which is true of many another.

I.

We see him as the anxious inquirer, groping his way, seeking light.

He had been impressed by Christ's words and works, thought that they displayed unusual wisdom and power, but knew not yet quite what to make of Him. He was puzzled, uncertain, and not willing to commit himself until the ground was made more sure. He came to Jesus by night—it would certainly have been a braver thing if he had come by day—the evangelist seems to hint as much by twice recording this incident.

Yet what more natural! When religious conviction was slowly shaping itself in you, when you felt your first half-undecided movements towards Christ service, you did not advertise it to the crowd, you did not

want to tell the world of it until you were sure of it yourself. There was many an hour of night-thought and secret prayer before you gave yourself openly to the blessed service. This man knew not yet what to believe. He did not understand his own heart. There was a certain charm in Christ which drew him. He seemed to be a teacher sent from God—perhaps He was the promised Saviour; but there was a doubt, and he was afraid of going too far until that doubt was settled.

He was a comparatively old man, and age is more cautious than youth. Old men do not so easily embrace new ideas or follow new masters. Among the first disciples of Christ we read of few or none who were advanced in years. It was youth that felt the first impulse of that Divine life—youth responds to it more readily now than age.

And this man too was a ruler of the people, a master in Israel, a member of the Jewish aristocracy, a learned and a rich man. It is always hard for such men to change their profession, to take up a new cause and adopt a new life. They are the observed of all eyes—what they do cannot be done in a corner. Their responsibility is greater, as the consequences of their action are greater. The higher up in social life men are the more is the difficulty of winning them to an open confession of Christian discipleship. The rich have so much to give up; the wise do not like to acknowledge that they have been in ignorance. The

honoured and flattered and much courted shrink from the possible obloquy that an open conversion may bring. There are all manner of silken fetters or golden chains hanging on their feet and making their steps reluctant. This man moved slowly, and no wonder. It was a terrible responsibility for a man in his position to take sides with One whom all the rich and honourable despised, to accept as Master and Saviour One whom all the learning of the nation rejected. He wanted to know more and weigh the whole matter well before he burnt his ships behind him or staked his whole life on that one throw.

There are some men and women who come into the Church, especially the young, on one strong resistless wave of fervour and enthusiasm. Their convictions mature suddenly; their decision is prompt; Christ calls them, charms them, kindles in them an ardent zeal; their feet make haste to do His bidding; they do not stop to count the cost; they fling themselves almost impetuously into His service, and let the whole world know at once that they are His. There are others whose very nature is to look carefully both before and behind before they move. They do nothing without deliberation. The Christian profession is with them an intensely solemn and awfully momentous thing. The responsibilities of it are immense. They dare not take it up without carefully counting the cost. Peter is the type of

one, Nicodemus is the type of the other, and Christ welcomes both alike.

Ah! if a man has made up his mind to be and remain a secret disciple, one hardly knows what to make of him. If a man really believes in Christ as his spiritual Master and Saviour, as the foundation of his hope for this world and the next, and yet declines to acknowledge it; if he seeks to enjoy Christ's gifts and have part in the Divine promises, and yet refuses to avow his faith lest some additional burdens and responsibilities be put upon him—we cannot say much for that man's courage, manliness, and fidelity, or even for the strength and depth of his convictions. It is too much like climbing up some other way instead of going straight through the door into the sheepfold. It is like the woman stealing virtue from Him in the press and hoping that it might not be known. No, if you profoundly believe in Christ and sincerely love, you will not be ashamed to avow His name.

But I believe that there are still many like Nicodemus, who keep their faith unavowed because they are not yet sure of it themselves. They are moving slowly towards the kingdom, possibly they are in it, but think themselves outside. They are half but not wholly convinced, seeking more light, requiring clearer evidences of their calling; believing, yet doubting; loving, yet distrusting their love; drawn, but not irresistibly drawn; and unwilling to take the

burden of the Christian profession upon them until they have weighed it yet more carefully. By-and-bye they will come, for Christ has a hold upon them and will not easily let them slip.

II.

The inquirer has become almost a confessor. He is standing up for Jesus, defending Him, and bearing distinct, though rather timid, witness for His name and cause.

It was in the great Council of the Jewish nation; the parliament of which he was a member. They were discussing Jesus; they had just made a vain attempt to get Him arrested; they were denouncing Him as a disturber, as a deceiver of the people; they were blaspheming Him, and saying all manner of evil against Him, demanding that He should be put to death, got rid of; they were mad with hatred. And one of their number got up and raised his solitary voice in protest, and they were too furious to listen. It was like a child's cry flung out against the storm, and they drowned it in an uproar of clamour, denouncing him there as a traitor to his party and religion.

That one man was Nicodemus. It is surprising how, in face of this incident, it could ever have been

supposed that this man was a fearful, weak-kneed and cowardly disciple. One can hardly imagine a braver thing. Truly the light had been growing clearer in him. His convictions were gathering strength, he was not yet quite decided, but the decision was not far off. He had made up his mind that Jesus was true and good, that there was something of God in him, that God had sent him; and he could not stand by in silence and hear the name slandered and maligned. The name was becoming very dear to him, and he would defend it though the defence cost him much. Another step and Christ would have him altogether.

You are not far from the kingdom of God when you begin to take your stand by His side; when you cannot hear Him or His truth ill spoken of without a feeling of pain, without just a little flash of indignation; when anything that savours of irreverence or contempt for His word and person provokes you; when you want to have Him honoured and His name lifted up. If it be so, you are more a disciple than you think. He has lodged Himself in your hearts, you are growing into the love of Him, and by-and-bye you will give yourself up to Him in a full surrender. And, in the closing scene of this little drama, in the scene where we get the last sight of Nicodemus, this is just what happens.

III.

The undecided man—the cautious inquirer gets a flood of light and conviction at the Cross.

All his hesitancy seems to vanish at the Cross. There Nicodemus comes to the front when others who had been foremost have fallen back; the hour of darkness and trial which shakes and for the time paralyses the faith of others, strengthens his faith and brings it out into the open. He and Joseph of Arimathea are the two men who come to take up Christ's wounded and broken body, and anoint it for the burial. He is one of the very few who remain faithful when disaster has come, and shame, and ruin, and the cause seems lost.

Ah! it might have been intended as a satire upon the disciples, that this man who had made no distinct avowal of his faith, who had been slowly groping his way towards a place in the kingdom, should show in that critical hour a strong, loyal, fearless devotion; while Peter and the rest, who had professed unlimited allegiance, who had promised that they would rather die than forsake Him, fell into a fit of cowardice, and left him to die alone, and to be buried anyhow or not at all.

God sometimes rebukes and shames us in the same way. There are men and women who have never made themselves known as His avowed servants,

never taken their place publicly in His Church, who are more faithful to Him, who suffer more for Him, who show more of His spirit when they are called than those who have claimed His name and confessed themselves His own for years.

There may be some who read this who have never sat down at the Lord's table; they are not sure that they are converted and regenerate men; not sure that they have a real part in Christ's Church; yet if their faith were sorely tried, if they were required under threat of some great penalty, or by force of some great bribe to deny Christ's name they would show more fidelity, more heroic courage than many of those who gather round the Lord's table—they are Christ's indeed. Oh, that they could have a little more confidence in their heavenly calling.

Nicodemus found full conviction at the Cross. The sight of that patient sufferer—that victim of the wrath and cruelty of men—dying so calmly and beautifully without a word of complaint, with a prayer on His lips for those who crucified Him—that was what did it. He had seen Christ's sinless life and heard His lovely teachings, and witnessed some of His miracles, but all this had left him still doubting. It was Calvary with all its pathetic beauty and melting tenderness, that broke down the last barrier and removed the last doubt, and made him a disciple indeed.

Yes, and so it ever is. It is the uplifted Christ

that draws men. It is the Cross that overpowers reluctances. You may admire Him for His wisdom and love Him in a way for the beauty of His person, and still draw back from the full avowal of your faith in Him. But as soon as you are brought face to face with those awful sorrows of His, that Divine love which bore so much, which forgot itself so utterly for the sake of sinners and for your sake; then you want to give Him your heart and life, you want to kneel before Him confessing; you are willing then that the world should know how much you love Him.

ST JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE

By Rev. Principal WALTER F. ADENEY, D.D.

ST JAMES THE SON OF ZEBEDEE

CONSIDERING the prominent position which James held among the Apostles as one of the inner group of three, and so important a personage that Herod selected him for execution and he became the first martyr of the Twelve, it is remarkable that we know very little about him. The meagreness of our information has led to an undue neglect of one who was evidently held in high esteem during his lifetime. Perhaps a further cause of this neglect is due to the fact that he was over-shadowed by his wonderful brother, as Frederick Tennyson, though a poet of considerable gifts, was over-shadowed by Alfred. One consequence is that the meagre field has not been gleaned so persistently as the more productive acres, where copious information is obtainable. Very little has been written about James in comparison of what has been said about John, Peter, or Paul, the well-known apostles. We may therefore betake ourselves to the study of this apostle with some sense of freshness in the enterprise.

James and John are the only apostles both of

whose parents are referred to in the Gospels. We learn that their father Zebedee was with them in the boat when Jesus called them to follow Him. This points to the probability that they were young men. Their father was strong and active. To leave him did not mean to desert a feeble old man dependent on the care and support of his children. He was a hardy fisherman, well able to carry on his work without them. The hired servants who were also assisting would make the loss of the two young men the less embarrassing to their father. That there should have been these assistants while Zebedee had two adult sons also engaged in the fishing, shows that between them they must have had a fairly good business. Though working for their daily bread, they did not belong to the poorer classes. They came from that vigorous lower middle class which has furnished so many effective workers for the cause of God and humanity in all ages—a class not so far removed from the danger of want as to be able to relax its energies and sink into self-indulgence, but yet not so bound down to drudgery as to lose heart and inspiration for subjects beyond the daily routine of toil. Among the Jews, who prized education, such a household as that of the prosperous master fisherman, Zebedee, would not be illiterate. We think of the disciples of Jesus as peasants. The word is ambiguous. Certainly they were not courtiers, nor were they

rich men clothed in fine linen and faring sumptuously every day. But neither were they mere boors. They were *unlearned and ignorant men* according to the pedantic notions of the Jewish *literati;* that is to say, they had not received the technical training of scribes; they were simple laymen, and without a university education. But they were not ignorant or undisciplined in mind. The Jewish school attached to every synagogue gave an education that was considered adequate at the time, and a household in the comfortable circumstances Zebedee could command would not be likely to miss its opportunities.

It is a significant fact that, after James and John had left their father at the call of Jesus, we never hear of Zebedee again. Their mother became one of the ministering women. Thus, unless there were other children, the home would have been quite broken up, and the head of the household left alone. This is not a pleasant position to contemplate. We can scarcely think that Zebedee himself joined the travelling discipleship, for in that case it is almost certain that the evangelists would have said so. Their silence implies that he was not met with again in the gospel story. Did he sulk? Was he hurt at his sons' desertion of him? Did he consider this a wrong, resent it, and set his face against the new movement that played such havoc with families and broke so roughly into the settled course of

life? If so, woman-like, did the mother side with her boys, and leave the poor man alone with his grumbling? All this is too much to conjecture on the ground of such barely negative evidence as we possess. On the other hand, it is too much to suggest, as in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, that probably Zebedee was a disciple of John the Baptist, since he consented to his sons joining themselves to Jesus. There is no evidence that he consented, although it seems clear that he did not forbid them. He appears simply to have stood aloof. This new movement won its followers chiefly among young men. The older generation was not so quick to welcome it, and Zebedee did not come under the spell of its novel enthusiasm. Still, his wife's conduct in deserting him may not appear to be altogether defensible. Perhaps it was not; perhaps she was to blame. After all, a woman's first duty is to her husband and her home. Of course, there is the conceivable possibility that Zebedee himself broke up the home, that after their two sons had left, he so resented their action that their mother, who would be sure to take their part, was really driven away. This idea, again, is not to be entertained without a particle of evidence in support of it. We must be content to leave the domestic riddle unsolved, satisfied with the sure conviction that Jesus would not have sanctioned undutiful or unkind conduct on the part of any of His disciples. There is the

possibility that poor Zebedee did not long survive the break-up of his domestic and business establishments. The cloud of mystery that hangs over the situation indicates at least the rigour, the strenuousness, the pain of the wrench from old ways that was inevitable in the execution of our Lord's programme. He saw it with distress, and spoke of having come to send a sword and to break up families. This was one of the necessities that saddened the soul of the "Man of Sorrows." There is a sternness in the gospel call which too many people seek to evade in the present day, when every effort is made to attract people by making religion what is called "bright."

The problem of James's mother is of another character. Her name was Salome. Though this is not directly stated, it may be inferred from a comparison of parallel passages in two of the Gospels. In Matt. xxvii. 55, 56, we have our first evangelist's account of the women at the Cross: "*And many women were there beholding from afar, which had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto Him: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.*" Now turn to Mark xv. 40: "*And there were also women beholding from afar: among whom were both Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome*"—Salome taking the place of "the mother of the sons of Zebedee." And

now, having thus obtained the name of the mother of the two disciples, we are able to advance to a further point, though on less sure ground. The account of the women at the Cross in the Fourth Gospel is as follows: "*But there were standing by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene*" (John xix. 25). Who was this sister of the mother of Jesus?

Some have said "Mary of Clopas," taking the two phrases in apposition as applying to the same person. But this is not the most natural interpretation; since the evangelist is giving a list of names, each clause would seem to indicate a separate person. Besides, is it likely that two sisters would have the same name, Mary? Then Salome, or the mother of Zebedee's children, if, she be not Mary's sister, is not mentioned by John, while, on the other hand, there is no reference in the Synoptic Gospels to "the sister of Mary." Is it not the reasonable explanation that the several evangelists mean one and the same person by their various designations? But if so, see what this involves. If Salome was the sister of Mary, James and John were the cousins of Jesus. Thus our Lord's most intimate disciples were His own relations. His brethren did not believe in Him during His earthly life; but after His resurrection James the brother of the Lord became the head of the Church at Jerusalem, and he was succeeded by Simeon a cousin. As late as the reign of Hadrian two

members of the family were arrested on suspicion owing to their relation to Christ. Thus we see our Lord's family connection was always of some account. Jesus would not sanction mere family privileges apart from merit. His own action led to the break-up of families. We must conclude that the opportunities of meeting Jesus afforded by their relationship brought these men under His influence, after which it was their spiritual affinity and faith that drew them to Him. There is some probability that, like Peter and Andrew, the two sons of Zebedee had been disciples of John the Baptist, who, by the way, was also a more or less distant relation, since his mother, Elizabeth, and Mary were kinswomen. Therefore, probably, they had met Jesus down by the Jordan. During the greater part of their early life, however, they would not have seen much of Him. He was living His quiet life at work in the carpenter's workshop at the highland town of Nazareth, which great hills, crossed only by rough steep paths, separated from the inland lake where they sailed their craft with their father.

Capernaum, the town in which the two brothers lived, was by no means so secluded as Nazareth. One of the high roads from the Mediterranean to the east passed through it. Then their industry involved some travel in hawking the fish about. While the teeming population round about Gennesaret consumed a great quantity, for fish from

their lake, with barley bread from the corn grown on the plain, was their staple food, so considerable an amount of the fish caught here was sent up to Jerusalem that one of the northern gates of the city was named the "Fish Gate." It is not unlikely that the sons of Zebedee took turns in carrying the salt fish to market. One of them, John, was known in the High Priest's household, a fact which indicates that he was a not infrequent visitor at Jerusalem. Perhaps he undertook this work and left James to more continuous companionship with their father. It was natural that the younger son should go forth and the elder stay more at home.

This remark brings us to another point. In all probability James was the elder of the two brothers. In the majority of instances where both are mentioned James comes first. This is invariably the case in Matthew and Mark, our two oldest Gospels. The secondary position is made especially emphatic by the way that John is repeatedly mentioned. We read, not "James and John the sons of Zebedee," but "*James the son of Zebedee and John his brother.*" It is curious to see how James gradually loses ground with respect to his brother. In Luke, our Third Gospel, they are mentioned five times, three times in the same order as in Matthew and Mark, and twice as "John and James" (Luke viii. 51, ix. 28).

In Acts, James never precedes John. The two

names occur thrice together in this book—first in the list of the Apostles, where the order in all three Synoptics (Luke included), "James and John," is deliberately or unintentionally reversed, and we have "John and James" (Acts i. 13).

The second instance is more striking. In the account of the martyrdom of James, where, for the time being, he must be reckoned the most important person in the story, we read "James the brother of John" (Acts xii. 2). This is the last occasion on which James is mentioned in the New Testament. Neither Paul, nor John, nor any other writer outside the Synoptics and Acts, ever refer to him. The change of order is the more significant when we observe it in comparison with parallel passages. The first case occurs in the account of the raising of the daughter of Jaïrus, where Mark has, "*And He suffered no man to follow with Him save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James*" (Mark v. 37). Luke changes the order of the names so as to read "Peter, and John, and James." Matthew has no parallel to this verse. The other case is at the Transfiguration, with a reference to the brothers by all three synoptic writers. There both Matthew (xvii. 1) and Mark (ix. 2) have Peter, and James, and John; but Luke (ix. 28) has "Peter and John and James." In the incident of the Samaritan village Luke reverts to the order of his predecessors (Luke ix. 54); and this is curious, since the paragraph has

no parallel in the other Gospels. While it is only Luke who reverses the order of the names, a step towards it may be seen in Matthew's last reference to them. In mentioning the three chosen friends whom Jesus took with Him, Mark had given them as "Peter and James and John" (Mark xiv. 33). Matthew gives them as "Peter and the two sons of Zebedee" (Matt. xxvi. 37).

Here, then, John has just come up with James. In Luke he twice passes before his brother; and in Acts he takes the first place definitely and without challenge. The narrative in Acts assigns to John an altogether more prominent position. He becomes the colleague of Peter. It is these two who go up to the Temple together, are associated with the cure of the lame man there, and are arrested and summoned before the Council. Here John is dissociated from his brother, with whom he appears invariably in the synoptic Gospels, and brought before us as in a peculiarly prominent position together with the leading apostle. For the time being James is entirely lost sight of.

The recession of James is only relative. We have no reason to say that this apostle actually lost ground. What he was at the first, that, for all we can tell, he may have remained to the end. But meanwhile John grew in importance, and as this came to be recognised the mere claim of seniority fell into the background. Then, especially in the

Gentile churches, for which Luke wrote, the more prominent apostle naturally took the first place, and his elder brother who was so much less conspicuous, was only known to the wider circle by his relation to John. Thus the first became last and the last first.

James's position in the gospel story cannot be dissociated from that of John. On three occasions —at the raising of the daughter of Jaïrus, at the Transfiguration, and in Gethsemane, the two brothers are especially chosen together with Peter, who takes precedence over both of them, to an especial privilege of companionship with Jesus. We know so little of James directly that this fact must serve as one source of information. Our Lord must have found in him something very congenial, or He would not have chosen him thus. The mere tie of consanguinity would not suffice for this. But now we have three occasions on which the two brothers are more or less prominent in conjunction and apart from Peter—at the naming of them, in the incident of the Samaritan village, and in the incident of the request for positions of high honour at the right hand and left hand of Jesus. What does this suggest? Surely that they were much alike in disposition. John must have had the more gifted intellect; and in the end this was bound to tell. Perhaps James had the greater energy, and that may account for his being selected as the first apostle to suffer martyrdom.

Possibly, then, John was the deeper thinker and James the more strenuous worker. But we have more indication of resemblances between them than of differences. John was a man of lofty genius; there is no proof that James had any genius at all. James, then, would be the smaller copy of that type of character which reached sublimity in the eagle vision and soaring of his great brother.

Let us look at these three incidents. The first is the naming. Jesus gave to each of His three select friends a new name—and as far as we know He did this with no others. In each case the name was significant. Simon He renamed Peter. To James and John He gave the same new name, surely significant of common characteristics which He discerned in the two brothers—*Boanerges—Sons of Thunder.* Their nature was tempestuous. Their disposition passionate, vehement, explosive. Jesus thought of them as storm clouds. Yet He not only selected them as apostles, but chose them as two of His three most intimate friends. Did He do so on account of this dangerous characteristic, or only in spite of it, viewing it as a disadvantage more than outweighed by their excellences? If we accept the latter view, we must conclude that Jesus named them after an objectionable trait of their character. Is that like His graciousness? We may think that He wished to guard them against their peculiar danger, by keeping the weak point in their nature always

in evidence. But is it likely that He would do this in a way that would be continually humiliating them in the eyes of their comrades? Besides, if this had been the intention, it must have been the exact opposite of the purpose of the surname Christ gave to Simon. Peter, the Rock, is not indicative of a defect of the apostle to whom the name was given. His fault was that he was not sufficiently rock-like, that he was too impressionable and unstable. Thus his name might serve as a stimulus, suggesting the ideal he was to endeavour to realise.* It is most improbable that Jesus would give the other two, one of them being His especially beloved disciple, a surname of exactly the opposite character, a sort of nickname, labelling them with the designation of their besetting failing. Boanerges then must be a title of honour. It indicates a character charged with peril, but also capable of mighty achievement. Anything is better than lethargy, torpor, inert indifference. Peter is rashly impulsive; James and John contain latent fires beneath their more calm exterior, fires which may flash out at times with terrific effect. The three choice friends represent mercurial and the electrical temperaments. To such Jesus seemed to be especially drawn. The mincing

* Unless we are to think of it as merely indicating the fact that he was in a way to be the foundation of the Church, an idea which might be suggested by Matt. xvi. 18, but which has no countenance in the other Gospels.

ways of our little modern world make us shrink from the Sons of Thunder. They deafen us; we think them rude. But they are needed. A slumbrous age wants thunder to arouse it.

Yet Jesus was fully awake to the dangers that peculiarly threaten people with such temperaments. He warned Peter of the temptation which would assail his impressionable nature, and He had to rebuke the Sons of Thunder for an unseemly explosion of wrath. It was when travelling south in the last journey up to Jerusalem they found themselves on the borders of Samaria. Jesus had courteously sent messengers in advance to a Samaritan village requesting hospitality, and this had been churlishly refused. According to Luke, the only evangelist who records the incident, it was because "*His face was as though He were going to Jerusalem*" (Luke ix. 53). This indicates that it was simply as Jews that Jesus and his friends were repulsed, as Jews interested in a Jewish feast at their temple of which the Samaritans, with their rival temple on Mount Gerizim, were jealous. Had they known Jesus as He had shown Himself on an earlier occasion in their own territory, by Jacob's well, they would have seen how unfortunately inappropriate their resentment was. This particular travelling party, though it consisted of Jews, was the least bigoted of all the companies of pilgrims going up to the feast. Had it been bigoted, it would have

followed the custom of some northern Jews and crossed the Jordan into Peræa, so as to travel south on the left bank of the stream and thus avoid the polluted district of Samaria. But the villagers knew nothing of this. As usual, their sectarian bitterness was proportionate to their ignorance. It was a very painful exhibition of narrowness. James and John were indignant. Observe, it is at this point in Luke's narrative that an arrest is put on John's advance beyond his brother in prominence, and the evangelist falls back on the old order which has the elder brother first. It would seem that in this case James may have taken the lead. At all events, they were acting in the way of their original natures, rather than in accordance with their Christian graces. In this region John had no claim to superiority. While all the other apostles are silent, these two burst out with their hasty proposal. It is that Christ would bid fire fall from heaven on the offending villagers. We are horrified at the idea. It is likely that the recent references to Elijah, and the appearance of the spirit of the prophet at the Transfiguration, had led these disciples to think of the scene in which the terrible man had called down fire from heaven on a company of Israelite troops.* But to expect Jesus to imitate

* 2 Kings i. 10. The reference to this incident disappears in the Revised Version. But though it cannot be ascribed to the original text of Luke, it seems to be a note introduced by some later hand giving a right explanation of the startling words of the two apostles.

the most ferocious action ascribed to one of the most primitive prophets indicates how little even His intimate friends understood Him. The only excuse for such a proposal was that they were beside themselves with anger, as another explanation suggested by some later hand, but removed from the text of Luke by the Revisers, suggests. They did not know what manner of spirit they were of. Still Jesus rebuked them; and this is all the original text tells us, adding no word of excuse.

The third of these gospel scenes also reveals the two brothers in no very amiable light. We have two accounts of it. In Mark, our earliest Gospel, we read how the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with a singularly ambitious request (Mark x. 35-40); in Matthew the presumption of the request is somewhat softened by coming from their mother (Matt. xx. 20), still even here it is said that they accompanied her; and they were not children; so they cannot be liberated from responsibility. The demand was that they should sit the one on the right hand of Jesus in His glory and the other on His left hand. There is no escape from the obvious conclusion that this demand was selfish and foolishly ambitious. Still it was not so outrageously unreasonable as might appear at the first blush of it. It is highly probable that these two disciples already occupied the relative places at table, in their ordinary meals, that they now coveted for the future condition. They were of the

inner group of the three intimates. John as the friend who "*leaned on the bosom of Jesus*" reclined immediately on his right hand, each right-hand person at table always leaning on the bosom of the person to his left, if he leant back when reclining on his own left elbow. Either Peter or James would occupy the left-hand place. But it was not Peter, because at the Last Supper he had to beckon to John to put a private question to Jesus (John xiii. 24). Then in all probability it was James. So it comes to this, that these two brothers were encouraged by their mother to seek for the future state of glory a continuance of their present privileges. May we go a step further in conjecture? In the recession of James we see John passing him; but Peter is already more prominent. May it be then a question whether Peter is to be preferred to James in the new condition of affairs? In Acts we see that the two leading apostles are Peter and John. Does this strange request deprecate that inevitable condition? Further, the time of the request confers a solemn dignity of faith on it. The significance of it would have been very different if it had been proffered in the heyday of our Lord's popularity. But it was made on the eve of His death. Darkest clouds then hung over his earthly prospects. At this most dismal period when a less heroic faith would have quailed, the sure trust of the two brothers and their mother that Jesus will triumph in the end, is almost sublime. We may illustrate it

by comparison with Jeremiah's redemption of his family's inheritance at the very time when the invading host of Babylon was encamped upon it.

Still, when all is said, the request was selfish and ambitious, and Jesus rebuked it by implication. They who would share Christ's glory must go by His way to it. The disciples seem too hasty in their request. Certainly this must be the case with their mother, or she would not be so bold to urge it. None of them know what it involves. Can they drink of His cup—that bitter cup of woe? Dare they submit to His baptism—that initiation to His new state by blood? Yes! They say they can. This is no vain boast. Awful as the consent is in its possible consequences, they will face them all in order to be near their Lord in His glory. Jesus perceives the deep seriousness of their resolve, and He acquiesces in it. This they shall do—though as to the privilege of the future, that must be left in other hands. It does not lie in His province. Only His Father is the Arbiter of future destiny. Jesus does not mean that the decision will be arbitrary or that the predestination is unconditional. The point is that it is wholly in God's hand. No favouritism can affect it.

James was the first of the two brothers to drink his Master's cup, the first apostle to suffer martyrdom. This was in the year A.D. 44, five years after the death of Christ. Herod Agrippa, the brother of John the Baptist's arch-enemy Herodias, "*killed James*

with the sword," and then went a step further and imprisoned Peter. Luke intimates that this was done to please the Jews (Acts xii. 1-3). It was an action of the civil authority, for once, and quite as an exception to the rule, adopting the policy of the Jewish religious leaders. We do not know why James was selected in preference to Peter and John, and treated more severely than Peter, the leader of Christians in Jerusalem. Was it that this "Son of Thunder" had been exceptionally provocative in the vehemence of his action? A little more than a century later, Clement of Alexandria mentioned a tradition, that James's accuser was so moved by the martyr's confession that he declared himself converted to Christianity, and was there and then carried off with him to execution. On the way, as Clement says, he asked forgiveness of James, who hesitated for a moment, and then *kissed him, saying*, "*Peace be unto you.*" Idle legends make out that this apostle preached in Spain—a quite impossible supposition; and again, that his dead body was put on board ship at Joppa and conveyed to Iria, in the north-west of Spain, where the heathen were converted by the miracles it worked. It was believed that the saint "appeared on many occasions mounted on a white horse, leading the Spanish armies to victory against their infidel foes." *

* See Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Article "James."

BARTIMÆUS

By Rev. Principal DAVID ROWLANDS, B.A.

BARTIMÆUS

THERE was great commotion at the gates of Jericho. People rushed from all directions, to see a small band of wayfarers who were approaching the city. The rumour had spread abroad some time before that they were on their way thither, so that everybody was watching for their arrival. At their head was Jesus, the mighty prophet of Nazareth, whose fame filled the land. The wonderful works which He performed, and the profound doctrines which He taught, attracted universal attention. The common people heard Him gladly, while the priests, the scribes, and the elders denounced Him as a heretic; but there was a consensus of opinion on all sides that He possessed superhuman powers. The difference between the reception given Him by the classes and that given Him by the masses, was easily accounted for; for the latter found in Him a friend who defended their rights, who sympathised with their sufferings, who helped them to overcome the difficulties of their lot; but the former knew that He was an uncompromising enemy of privilege, injustice,

and sham—things which made up, so to speak, their entire existence. Be this as it may, both friends and foes were equally interested in His movements, wherever He went.

By the highway side, in view of the bustling throng, there sat a blind man begging. Of this man we know nothing more than his name and his parentage; we are simply told that he was "Bartimæus, the son of Timæus," a designation, which doubtless suggested to his fellow-citizens a number of facts of which we are ignorant. Still his name is familiar throughout Christendom, and will become more and more familiar as time goes on. It happens, now and then, that a man acquires renown merely through coming in contact with a personality greater than himself. It is not likely, for example, that we should have heard much of Boswell had he not been so intimately associated with Johnson. However, it is not who this man was that is really important, but what he did and what was done for him on this memorable occasion.

The blind man is generally an object of compassion. You cannot behold him, if you are possessed of human feelings, without pitying his forlorn condition. There he stands, in the midst of a world full of beautiful forms and delightful hues, and yet he cannot for a moment enjoy them. He is, in a manner, shut up in total darkness; immured in a dismal dungeon, which neither sun, moon, nor stars illumine with

their radiance — which neither lovely flowers nor pleasant landscapes gladden with their smiles. Still this is the condition of thousands of the human race; the first ray of light they can hope to see is that which will burst upon their view after they have passed through the valley of death. What depths of woe Samson's lament reveals :—

> "O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon
> Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
> Without all hope of day!"

Such was the condition of Bartimæus—he was blind.

Besides all this, he was also poor; for he "*sat by the highway side begging.*" It is bad enough to be blind even in affluence, when a man has sufficient means to procure every comfort his heart may desire; when he has plenty of friends, who anticipate his every wish and minister to his every want. But when in addition to being blind, he is poor, friendless, and uncared-for; when at the close of the day he knows not where the supplies of the morrow are to come from, surely his plight is unspeakably wretched. Probably Bartimæus's poverty was due to his blindness. Having been born of lowly parents, who had been unable to provide for his maintenance, and being incapable of earning his own livelihood, poverty must have been his inevitable lot. So he took to begging, which, in an age when the poor were supported by individual benevolence, was the only

course open to him. He was a genuine object of charity; the passer-by need not have troubled himself as to the propriety of giving him alms; for he was truly poor—poor through no fault of his own, poor through the manifest visitation of God.

"The prophet! the prophet!" the people cried, as they hustled one another in their eagerness to catch a glimpse of Him. "What prophet?" asked Bartimæus of those near him. "Don't you know?" said they, "It is Jesus of Nazareth, who is going to stay this night in the city, on his way to Jerusalem." At the name, "Jesus of Nazareth," the blind man was startled. He had heard no end of reports of this great prophet, of the marvellous skill He possessed in dealing with incurable diseases, of His readiness to succour the poor, the maimed, and the suffering. And he thought within himself, "Here is a chance for me. Who knows but He will have compassion on my miserable state?" Without further consideration he called out at the top of his voice, "*Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.*" But he was too late this time. Jesus was already at some distance, and the hubbub caused by the crowd drowned his pleading voice. But he was nothing daunted by this check; on the contrary, it seemed to inspire him with greater determination. He left his seat at once, and directed his steps towards the city, for the purpose of finding a friend of his, a brother in tribulation, a blind man like himself with whom he often consorted.

What was the motive which prompted him to adopt this course? Was it a purely disinterested affection; or was there in it a tinge of selfishness? It is difficult to say. Most likely he desired the same priceless boon for his friend as he did for himself, and he was probably convinced also that a united appeal—made by two of them—would be more likely to prove successful. Early next morning he was again at his customary seat—with his friend at his side—listening eagerly for the procession that was sure to accompany Jesus on his way out of the city. Nor had he to wait long. A huge company of all sorts and conditions of men filled the road; scribes and Pharisees, priests and Levites, mingled with the ignorant populace, and for the moment forgot the distinctions which separated them in ordinary life. Poor, shallow, excitement-loving humanity was just the same then as it is now, ever ready to be carried away by the latest sensation. Bartimæus was not going to be foiled a second time, and so before Jesus had quite reached the place where he sat, he cried out for himself and his companion, in a voice that silenced the babblings of the mob, and made every eye turn towards him with amazement, "*Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.*" Here we have a man laying hold on a precious and rare opportunity, and fully resolved not to let it slip. Jesus was near him; He might never come so near again; now, then, or never, was his time to seek mercy. What

did it matter to him what others thought of his conduct? What though the lookers-on thought him half crazy, and treated him as a disturber of the peace? The object on which he had set his heart was worth braving everything for its sake. We see in the behaviour of this man a lesson for us—a lesson which we have all need to be taught. Opportunities so valuable, so great, so glorious—opportunities to do good to ourselves and to others—opportunities to save our own souls and to facilitate the salvation of our fellows—these grand opportunities present themselves to us continually, and many of them are neither recognised nor appreciated until they are gone for ever. Not a week, nor perhaps a day, passes, in which we have not cause to sorrow for our negligence in this respect.

Crowds are proverbially callous; consideration for the individual is generally the last thing they think of showing. Is it because they feel that the individual has no right to interfere with the pleasure of the many? It may be so. One thing is certain; an act which a man would recoil with horror from doing on his own responsibility, he will do without compunction when joined by a great number. How many of those Jews who raised the frantic shout, "Away with Him! crucify Him!" would have done so by themselves? Justice to human nature, with all its shortcomings, compels us to suppose that very few of them could have been so steeped in

cruelty. The crowd on this occasion was in no wise different from others similarly constituted. It is probable that many of them knew Bartimæus personally—knew him to be poor, blind, and helpless —and they may have frequently expressed their commiseration for him as they responded to his appeal for alms. They must have known, moreover, that Jesus possessed miraculous powers, and could, if He wished, cure this man of his blindness, as He had cured many others. Still, rather than that they should be annoyed with his cries, or (shall we say?) rather than that Jesus should be detained on His journey, they charged the man to hold his peace. "What do you mean?" said they, "by making this unseemly noise? Do you think the prophet has time to attend to every suppliant that has the assurance to trouble Him in this rude fashion? You ought to be ashamed of yourself." Don't you see how miserably selfish they were, and how utterly they had mistaken the disposition of our Lord? Suppose they themselves had been blind instead of Bartimæus, do you think they would have adopted similar language? do you think they would have desired our Lord to pass heedlessly on? It is not likely. They were therefore far from being animated by the spirit of love, which prompts men to do to others as they would have others do to them. This kind of selfishness is very prevalent in the world; we meet it on every hand; and great is the mischief

wrought by it. It is, in most cases, the result of thoughtlessness rather than of malice. Men don't care to enter into the sorrows of others; hence they treat them with indifference, and any attempt to alleviate them, which involves the least inconvenience to themselves, provokes their opposition. A great calamity happens; but it does not touch them; so they think no more about it, and justify themselves by saying that it is quite enough for them to bear their own burdens. But this glaring thoughtlessness is most culpable. It betokens a sad misapprehension of man's position as a social being. This world will never be set right until men learn the evil of self-concentration—until men learn to regard the welfare of others equally important with their own. Let no man dream of shifting his responsibility to the society, the community, or the country to which he belongs; let no man take shelter behind the multitude who "do evil"; before God every man stands or falls by himself.

Bartimæus, however, was not to be silenced by the senseless exhortations of the crowd. He knew the value of sight too well, through long deprivation, to throw away this unique chance of obtaining it. Had he been seeking something to which he did not attach much value, it is likely that he would have immediately held his peace; he would not have run the risk of incurring the displeasure of those who commanded him, as it might have made them

withhold the alms upon which he was dependent. But since he sought to recover his sight, the greatest in his estimation of all earthly blessings, nothing could prevail upon him to desist. Indeed, opposition only made him cry the more, "*Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!*" His conduct remains for all time a conspicuous example of indomitable importunity. Can any one wonder at his conduct? Is it not the very conduct we might have expected from one thoroughly in earnest? And we may say that it has been repeated times without number in the cases of men who, having been awakened to the reality of their spiritual blindness, have sought the illumination of God's Spirit. We need not refer to martyrs and confessors of past ages, who in spite of the penalties inflicted upon them, in spite of spoliation, imprisonment, torture, and death, persisted in calling upon the name of the Lord. We rejoice to know that there are men now, scattered all over the earth, whom no conceivable consideration could induce to cease praying for God's mercy. Worldly men may mock them, laugh them to scorn, and call them enthusiasts, fanatics, and madmen; it matters not, for the surpassing excellence of the prize for which they strive has made them determined to obtain it.

Evidently Jesus' true character was not yet generally known. It is indeed doubtful whether His own disciples had any idea of the intense joy

He felt in relieving the distressed. His boundless compassion was such, that neither friend nor foe could appreciate or comprehend it. No music was sweeter to His ears than the cry of the helpless seeking help. Imagine the astonishment of those who charged Bartimæus and his companion to be quiet, when they found that Jesus called them, and was ready to attend to their case. After all, what they had ignorantly thought would annoy Him, only gave Him pleasure. On this occasion, as on many others, He manifested the most glorious feature in His character — the feature which pre-eminently qualifies Him to be the Saviour of the lost—His sympathy with the lowly and wretched. What if, like the priest and the Levite in the parable, He had passed by on the other side, never pretending to hear these poor men's supplication! What a different impression we should have had of His character and disposition! What a gloom it would have cast over the hearts of those who need His aid! But He did nothing of the kind; on the contrary, His demeanour on this occasion is calculated to inspire with confidence the most despised and miserable of men who may cry to Him for mercy. Let it be known everywhere; let it be proclaimed wherever there is sin and woe, that the love of Christ is unbounded, and that no man coming to Him need fear to be cast out.

The question which our Lord puts to Bartimæus

strikes us as being somewhat strange. He who knew all things asks, "*What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?*" We are inclined to ask, Why should He put him this question? Did He not know well enough what he wanted? nay, did not every man in the crowd know it? Yet this fact serves to illustrate what seems remarkable in connection with prayer at all times. Why should God require us to pray for the things that we need? Does He not know our wants even better than we do ourselves? We are told, "*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*" And again, "*Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do.*" And again, "*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*" Thus for some wise purpose, which we are not at present able to fathom, God imparts spiritual gifts only to those that ask for them. The sinner who feels a load of guilt lying upon his conscience, must ask God to remove it; the Christian beset by the trials and temptations of life, must ask God for strength to overcome them. Whenever, therefore, we draw nigh to God in prayer, we must have a definite request to make; for this is an indispensable condition of success.

Observe the words with which our Lord accompanies the exercise of His great power, "*Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.*" In these words our Lord appears to affirm by implication that Bartimæus received only what was his by a sort of right; something which He himself could not well withhold; something which the man's faith fairly claimed. "*Thy* faith *hath made thee whole.*" He takes no credit to Himself; but wishes to impress upon Bartimæus, and upon all who witnessed the transaction, the mighty power of faith. And this instance is not alone in this respect. On other occasions when conferring miraculous gifts, He employed similar words. He regarded such cases as so many confirmations of the truth of His own doctrine; for He taught that faith could do all things, that faith could remove mountains into the midst of the sea. The age of miracles is past; the blind no longer receive their sight in answer to prayer; still the power of faith is no less in the spiritual realm than it was of old. Though salvation—the healing of the diseased soul—is altogether of God; though we have, in one sense, no right to the least spiritual gift; we are taught in the gospel that eternal life—the gift of gifts—is ours if we only believe. "*He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life*"; it is his lawful inheritance; there is no power imaginable that can deprive him of it. How great then the privilege of all who hear the gospel! They are freely invited

to believe; and when they believe "*all things are theirs; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are theirs, and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's.*"

Two questions present themselves to the reflecting mind which are not difficult to answer.

In the first place, why has the story of Bartimæus —and others of a similar character—been so minutely recorded? It is because Jesus, the mighty Healer, still walks the earth. These were the words with which He took leave of His disciples on the Mount of Olives, "*Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.*" When we read the records of the evangelists, when we ponder over the marvellous incidents by which the life of Christ was distinguished, we seem to be contemplating a state of things which no longer exists, we seem to be tracing the footsteps of One, who, for a brief period, appeared among men, and then disappeared for ever. The impression is a true one in a superficial sense; but then there is a sense in which it is not true. The fact is, that Jesus Christ is a living presence in our midst to-day, as truly as when He was seen and heard in the land of Judea nineteen hundred years ago. He went about doing good then, He comforted the broken-hearted, healed the sick, and raised the dead then; and He goes about doing good now, He comforts the sorrowful, heals the afflicted, and raises up those who are

"dead in trespasses and sins" now. He very often passes by every one of us, He gives us a thousand opportunities of seeking His aid, and of crying for His mercy. Every time we hear the gospel, every time we read His words, every time our thoughts are directed to eternal realities, He is near to us; and, were our spiritual perceptions not so woefully blunted, we should always feel His presence. His treatment of Bartimæus has been detailed in order that we may surely know what we can expect at His hands when we invoke His aid.

In the second place, what became of Bartimæus after this wonderful event? His subsequent history is almost altogether a matter of conjecture. We have but a few words to guide us, but those words are so full of significance that volumes might be based upon them. One evangelist says, "*And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.*" Another evangelist, referring to his companion as well as himself, says, "*And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.*" We may reasonably suppose that his companion was only a commonplace man, who never distinguished himself in holy service, and whose name, for that reason, has perished. Bartimæus, on the contrary, became an active worker in the cause of truth. He joined himself to that noble army of witnesses who devoted their lives to proclaim the glory of their Saviour-King. For many years to come—so we infer—he

was a conspicuous adherent of the new faith, and foremost among its confessors. He was not learned, but he knew one thing; that Christ had given him sight, both physical and spiritual; and that knowledge made him steadfast in the face of hardships, persecution, and even death. And so his name has been enrolled among the immortals, whose heroism, fidelity to principle, and unquenchable love to God and man, helped to establish Christianity on an immovable foundation.

ZACCHEUS

By Rev. J. G. GREENHOUGH, M.A.

ZACCHEUS

"A man that is a sinner. . . . A son of Abraham."—ST LUKE xix. 7, 9.

IT was like Jesus to single out Zaccheus from a whole cityful of people as the man to entertain Him. Jesus never did things as He was expected to do them, but always as no other man would have done them.

Zaccheus had never been so astonished before in his life as when he heard Jesus say: "*Come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.*" If the sycamore tree had talked to him, he would not have been more surprised. And the people around were indignantly and angrily surprised. Going to stay with a publican, what does He mean? The modern publican is not much loved by religious people, but his name and trade are not in half such bad repute as were those publicans of old to the average Jew.

All know what their business was. Tax-gatherers for the Roman Government—paid servants of a government which the Jews hated, and not over honest withal, as a rule. They paid the government

a fixed sum, and kept all that was over for themselves. That system was just the one to make rogues, and hearts as hard as grindstones, and it usually did. The publicans bled the poor taxpayers to the last drop, and grew rich on extortion. Some of them tried to be just, but it was difficult, and they got little credit for it. They were loathed as a class—good, bad, and indifferent among them grouped together as sinners, and coupled with harlots, as outside human charity and beyond the reach of God's mercy.

Zaccheus had probably been a little above the average, with a few soft places in his heart. Not quite like the nether millstone. But he had grown rich in the business. His hands had not always been clean. He doubtless deserved some of the evil notoriety in which he stood; and when Jesus singled him out for a sort of special honour, a shudder went through the crowd as they murmured, "*That He was gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner.*" They were right; he was a sinner. He had been unmistakably a sinner, that was what they saw in him, and it was all they saw and all they wished to see. Jesus looked deeper. He always looked deeper than other people. If there was the least spark of grace or remnant of goodness in a man, Jesus never overlooked that. There was another side to this man Zaccheus which Jesus at once discovered. He had a conscience that was uneasy at the remembrance of

wrong-doing. He had the beginning of repentance and faith, and longing for a better life. He was eager to make restitution of all that he had got unjustly. He was anxious to begin again on fairer, straighter lines. He was ashamed of his past life, and probably very miserable because no one believed in him. He just wanted some strong tender hand to help him up, and when Jesus spoke to him in that kindly way, it was almost as if heaven had opened. Jesus saw all this, the other, better side of the man. To the people, he was only Zaccheus the sinner; to the clearer eyes of Jesus, he was a son of Abraham, with a little of Abraham's faith. Read the story in that way, and it suggests various thoughts to us.

I.

Zaccheus was not one man but two, and in this respect he is a type of humanity.

He is a mirror in which every one of us can see his own face if he will. If there is no other resemblance between you and this publican, you are like him in that. There are two men in every man, two women in every woman. There are sometimes four or five, or even twenty, but there are always at least two. And the two have often very little in common. They are inconsistent, out of harmony, antagonistic; they

rarely agree; they are engaged in perpetual quarrel; they are yoked together like two creatures that hate each other; they are like two married people whose union is burdensome to each, and who would like to be separated but cannot: and each of them gets the upper hand in turns.

It is as if you had two masters, each one having his day when he controls and orders you about. One is the sinner, and the other the son of Abraham; one does all the wrong things, and the other repents of them; one prays or would like to pray, the other either forgets to pray or flouts prayer; one is hard, unfeeling, ungenerous, keeps as tight a hold upon the purse as Judas did, the other is tender, sympathetic, tearful; one is envious, jealous, unforgiving, the other is pitiful, forbearing, easy to be entreated; one is sensual, animal, with its eyes fixed earthwards, and its affections set on coarse delights and material good, the other has the face of an angel or a child, its eyes look upward, its thoughts are pure and spiritual; one is forgetful of everything except the enjoyments of the present time and the passing day, the other is conscious of immortality, it has visions of a future life, it hears voices from the eternal world.

We all have these two men in us, not in the same degree, but in some degree. The best of you have a little of the publican mixed with the nobler Abraham. The ripest saint is weighed down with the burden of another and coarser self; and the whole

endeavour of the Christian man and the Christian life is a battle between these two: the ceaseless effort of the higher to subdue the lower, of the divine to overpower and cast out its hated yoke-fellow. We know that this is true of Christ's people; we feel it. The sinner and the son of Abraham—every godly man holds these antagonisms.

But it is no less true in a minor degree of those who make no religious profession. The double Zaccheus is in them also, the sinner and the tiny bit of Abraham. Just a spark of Abraham's faith and goodness in the pitchy darkness of sin. It is not the sinner, it is the bit of Abraham, that brings some of you to God's house. One man in you proposes to spend the evening in the streets or parks; the other man said, No, I should like to be in the place where they talk about God, Jesus, and eternity. The publican in you drew one way, and the Abraham in you another. You have often a little tug and wrestle of that kind; you have all the fluttering, feeble wings of aspiration in you, though they are often folded down unused, and you even forget that you have them. Underneath that coarser nature of yours there is a soul with gleams of divinity shining about it, though for the most part it is like a thing stowed away and forgotten. But at times God brings it out and shows it to you, and then you are ashamed of your other and baser self. There is some giddy, giggling, frivolous girl of whom I am told that

she thinks of nothing but dress, gaiety, silly books, and flirting. I know better. She has serious moments; there are times when something stirs the deeper waters; she has dreams of goodness. And the young man whose life is spent with fast companions, whose thoughts seem never to get above sports, betting, and low indulgences, even he has his solemn moments, when visions of better things float past, and he despises and hates the poor vile thing he is. There are always these two men in every man: the sinner and the son of Abraham.

II.

It is always the Abraham in a man, the truer and diviner man, that Jesus sees, lays hold of, and appeals to.

Of course Jesus sees the sinner as well, all the foulness and ungodliness of him, but He never fails to see the Abraham and to work upon that. He saw at once that Zaccheus was something more and better than the people took him for. It was as if our Lord had said, you judge this man entirely from his outside features; you find nothing in him but the hard, greedy, grinding tax-gatherer, the unfeeling money-maker, the soulless machine, the vampire sucking your blood. You treat him from that point

of view, and in so doing you help to make him what he is on his worst side; you strengthen the evil part of him, you crush and extinguish the good in him by refusing to believe in it.

For that was precisely what they were doing. What was the use of a publican trying to be an honest man, when no matter how he tried, everybody was still of opinion that he was a rogue. He gave up trying to be generous, when he found that no one expected him to be generous or believed in his generosity. He gradually lost self-respect, because he saw nothing but contempt and dislike in the faces that met him. He came at last to feel: It is of no use—better things are not for me. I cannot gain friendship, affections, and the trust of my fellow-men; there is nothing left for me except to make as much money as I can, and not be particular about the means. They call me a sinner, and that must be my line. There is many a man who goes down like that, because people see nothing but his worst, and do not believe that there is any better in him.

But when Jesus spoke to Zaccheus, and called him down, and treated him as if he was not quite dead in sin, not wholly abandoned to the devil, a change came over the man's thoughts. It made him believe in himself again. What! this holy prophet thinks I am worth speaking to. This man of God does not utterly despise me; He is not ashamed to be my guest; He sees that I am not all that the people deem me; He

believes in me. That came like a reviving breath. The self-respect of the man sprang up again in a moment. He saw his own truer self in a swift vision. He began to repent, to hope, to long for better things. The Abraham in him came up as from its grave. Lord, he said, I am ready to do anything that will undo the past and set my feet upon a higher way. Jesus had brought salvation to him, because Jesus had taken him by the better side, begun by recognising the better side, and treating him as one who could be and ought to be saved.

And that surely is the only way in which we can help and save men now. However bad, vile, unclean they are, we must approach them on the assumption that even in them there is some trace of God's image left—something that is not animal. We must start by recognising the Abraham in them. We must lay hold of the bit of good in them before we can make that bit of good more. Men have a tendency to become what we are determined to believe they are. They show us what we expect to see. If we regard them simply as coarse, sensual, grovelling creatures, we help to make them that, at least we never help them to be more than that, and that is all they ever will be if all other people regard them as we do. If we would lay hold of the worst men to do them good, we must credit them, at least, with some desire for good; we must credit them with just a little right, true, and honest feeling; we must credit them with

just a faint glimmer of religiousness; we must believe that they have occasional stirrings of pure conscience, and spasmodic movements of the soul towards higher things. We cannot save them so long as we see nothing but the sinner in them. It is through the bit of Abraham in them that they must be saved. It is the bit of Abraham in the worst men that Jesus uses as a lever to raise them into sons of God.

If I were appealing to the most confirmed and hardened sinner, there would be two ways of addressing him. I might say, You are as bad as bad can be; and you know it: you are full of uncleanness, your heart and life are just the hold of every foul spirit, and there is an awful hell in reserve for you. I might talk to him in that way; or I might take the other line, and say, You had a mother who prayed for you, and you have not forgotten it: you were in the Sunday-school, and some of its lessons remain: you have heard that Jesus died for you, and you have more than once been touched by the thought there is something in you which God loves, and He would not love nothing but a lump of vileness: you many a time wish that you could be a better man, and that proves there is still something good left. Which of these two ways would be more effective? I know, and every one here knows.

If Jesus were to come among us, and go from one to another, the best and the worst, making His tender appeal, there is not one, however seemingly irreligious,

whom He would not address as a religious creature. He would say you are not just what men think you are, you are not exactly what you seem to yourselves, you are something more. There are times when prayer stirs in you, or at least something very much like prayer. There are times when you wish to turn away from the evil that you are doing, when you are a little sick or weary of your sinful life, when you are ashamed of your past and anxious about your future, when you feel that you have souls worth saving. Jesus would say, in the name of these things, I plead with you; let Me come into your hearts that I may strengthen, perfect, and multiply these things. So Christ would speak, appealing to the son of Abraham in you; and so in Christ's name would I speak to you now and always.

LAZARUS

By Rev. T. RHONDDA WILLIAMS

LAZARUS

THE story of the raising of Lazarus from the grave requires, to many readers, some sort of explanation other than that which lies on the surface. They cannot believe, on the amount of available evidence, that a man who had been really dead for four days came back to live again among his fellows on the earth. They are met at once by the fact that none of the first three Gospels records this miracle. No other miracle so extraordinary is recorded of Jesus. If He performed this, it was His greatest. The daughter of Jaïrus had only just died; the son of the widow of Nain was on the way to burial; but Lazarus had been dead four days.

Upon the most conservative computation the Fourth Gospel was not written until about fifty years after the death of Jesus. Is it conceivable that such an extraordinary fact as the raising of Lazarus would remain so long unrecorded, and that three Gospels should be made to tell the story of Jesus, and leave this crowning miracle out of the record? If it took

place, its very nature would make it well known, and much talked of; how could it be ignored?

Moreover, there are difficulties in the story itself. "*Jesus wept.*" Wendt pertinently suggests the question: why? If Jesus, as He looked upon the weeping women, knew, that in a few minutes, He would give them back their brother alive, why should He "groan in spirit"? Would He not say at once: "Be comforted, I will restore him to you immediately"? Is it thinkable that one who was immediately going to reanimate the dead should weep over his death? How could tears be real in such a case? Then again, the place of the story in the general scheme and in relation to the evident purport of the Gospel must be considered. This is the seventh great miracle of an ascending series, beginning with the miracle of Cana, all designed to form an impressive demonstration that Jesus was the Messiah. The evangelist leaves us in no doubt that this was the purpose of his Gospel. "*These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*" And this is known *from the outset* of His career. Here John differs from the Synoptics irreconcilably. According to the first three Gospels, Jesus is with the disciples for a considerable time before He gets from them the confession that He is the Messiah. His own desire is to conceal the fact from the public until His hour is come. In the Fourth Gospel, He is recognised as Messiah at His baptism by John the Baptist, and His

first miracle was done *in order* to proclaim His Messiahship—the very first was *the beginning of signs.*

This writer sets out, then, with the definite purpose of demonstrating the Messiahship, and he arranges his material accordingly. While he again and again asserts that Jesus did many signs, it is significant that he selects *seven*—the perfect number to be a perfect proof—the seven are in an ascending scale, with the raising of Lazarus as the crowning miracle. And where these belong to the same class as the miracles of the Synoptics, they are *more wonderful.* If Jesus cures a lame man, it is a man who has been lame *thirty-eight* years; if He gives sight to the blind, it is to one who had been blind *from birth;* if He raises the dead, it is one who has been four days in the grave! If this is not the record of a literal fact, why is the time set at *four days?* Schmiedel quotes Lightfoot and Wettstein on the Jewish belief that "the soul of the departed lingers about the body for three days, ready to return into it if possible; on the fourth day it definitely takes its departure, because it sees that the countenance is wholly changed. For the same reason, the identification of the body of a person whom one has known in life, is held to be possible only for the first three days; after that the change is too great to admit it." Schmiedel quotes further testimony to the same view from *The Rest of the Words of Baruch*, a work near the time of Jesus. This belief would give the author the material

for his story of wonder, the wonder put into the mouth of Martha: "*Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days*"! The wonder of re-animation on the second or third day would not have been so great. There is no necessity to regard the raising of Lazarus as a literal fact in order to account for the existence of the story—the story could very well have come without the fact.

That, however, does not disprove the fact, it only destroys the evidential value of the story as regards the fact. There was the story of Elisha raising a corpse to life, and the belief recorded in Matthew that when Jesus died many saints rose from their graves and went into the city!

It is possible for some minds to believe to-day that the raising of Lazarus was a literal fact, and a miracle in the ordinary sense of the word, though they could not satisfactorily explain its omission from the other Gospels, nor the fact that Jesus wept while He knew that He was about to turn mourning into joy. There are others who believe it was a fact, but not a miracle; that it was one of many cases of trance. It is possible that the undoubted fact of resuscitation which had often occurred, and which occurs yet, may have had something to do with the Jewish belief previously referred to, that the soul lingers for three days about the body. Another possible explanation of the story of Lazarus is that it is the materialisation of a spiritual fact. That is undoubtedly the way in which

some miracle stories arose. Dr Percy Gardner quotes the striking case of Mohammed's saying, "God opened my heart," which was meant in a spiritual sense, coming at length to a material interpretation, and working out into a detailed story of a physical miracle. We can easily imagine that the presence and words of Jesus would be such a lifting help to sorrowing sisters, that they would almost feel as if their brother had been given back to them. The present writer can very vividly recall the day of his mother's funeral, when, in a little chapel between the Welsh hills, he bowed his head to touch her coffin while the minister prayed. The world was dark, and to the youth of fifteen the realms of life were songless. He was about to leave home for school in a distant town: he had hoped to anchor his soul in a correspondence with his mother; but, alas, she was dead, dead! He was desolate and despairing. But there was an old patriarch in the pulpit whom he regarded as a great saint of God, who had often touched his youthful spirit to mystic wonder and adoration. The old man prayed, and it was like a high priest entering the Holy of Holies; he so played upon the words of a verse—"*fled to lay hold on the hope set before them*"—that the boy felt as if he saw his mother in the other life laying hold of its treasures, and still somehow remaining his real mother all the time. The feeling was so strong, that when the bowed head was raised, death itself had been transfigured, and

hope shone again upon the world. Even to this day, that experience is often recalled, and the great fact of resurrection sings in triumph over death.

What must Jesus have been to people in such sorrow? He to whom life not death, beauty not desolation, were the great facts, and to whom God was so real. Could He not put Mary and Martha in the hold of life so richly, that they would feel to have triumphed over death. The story of such a spiritual experience, like the spiritual saying of Mohammed, might in the after-time become the story of a physical miracle. If that were accepted as the explanation, would anything vital be lost? Nothing. Should we not miss one great proof of Jesus Christ's Divinity? Not so. The raising of the body of Lazarus from the grave would not prove Him to be God. The old Unitarians believed in all the miracles, while they denied the Deity. That contention claims more than it intends. Elisha also, on that ground, might be proved to be God.

Miracles are no argument for Christ or Christianity. The Divinity of Jesus was in His Spirit—where else can Divinity be? The power to heal the broken-hearted and to raise up those who are bowed down is the Divine power, wherever we find it; and it is the extraordinary measure of it in Jesus that gave Him His hold upon the world, and that will keep us at His feet in prayer and adoration, as long as we know the struggling heart and the aspiring

spirit. Nor are we without some indication in the story itself that this was what happened.

Wendt seems to the present writer to be the most illuminating commentator of the Fourth Gospel. It seems impossible to understand it as a unit. There is the remarkable fact that the evangelist relies upon *signs* as proofs, and represents Jesus as beginning the signs at the wedding-feast of Cana for the sake of demonstrating His Messiahship, while, at the same time, he records words of Jesus which depreciate and discourage *signs!* In the Synoptics, Jesus refuses signs as proofs, and says that only "*a crooked and stubborn generation*" would ask for them. Many a point in the discourses in the Fourth Gospel endorses that attitude, and yet the evangelist is marshalling signs as proofs!

Nicodemus introduces himself to Jesus as a believer in the miracles, but Jesus insists that he must be born from above! Suppose, then, that the evangelist succeeded in his aim—viz., to get men to believe on the evidence of miracles that Jesus was the Messiah—would not Jesus turn to them as to Nicodemus and say, "*Ye must be born from above*" —new birth, regenerated character, admits to the kingdom, not belief in miracles? The point is that in the Fourth Gospel itself, the point of view of the discourses is different from that of the evangelist. To account for this, Wendt maintains that the evangelist was making use of an older document,

which he calls the *Source*. The *Source* included historical sayings of Jesus, and some compositions.

Wendt undertakes to separate the *Source* from the work of the evangelist, and it throws a most helpful light on many difficult passages. The parts of chapter xi., which belong to the *Source*, or have their basis in the *Source*, are these: verses 1, 3, 5, 6-10, 16-35, 38. If the reader will mark these off from the rest in his New Testament, he will find a story consistent in itself, not including the physical miracle of raising the dead, but showing how Jesus gave Mary and Martha this deep genuine human sympathy, and this Divine helpful truth in such a way as could in the after-time work out into the other story of physical miracle. The most important words in the narrative are those of verses 25, 26: "*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.*" These words do not refer to physical life, nor to one special case. Jesus had told Martha, "*Thy brother shall rise again.*" Martha thought He referred to physical resurrection, and said she knew he would rise in the last day. If Jesus had meant physical resurrection, He would have replied, "I will raise him now"; or He would have endorsed Martha's faith in the resurrection of the last day. He did neither; He pointed her to a different sort of fact altogether for her comfort. "*I*

am the resurrection"—the resurrection is not an event, not something that is to happen; nor is it a doctrine; the resurrection is spiritual personality and character! "*I am the resurrection and the life, and whosoever believeth in Me*" shareth Me, My nature, My character: "*though he die, yet shall he live.*"

The word "*whosoever*" shows that Jesus is not speaking of the one special case of Lazarus which is going to be an *exception;* the resurrection he speaks of is the fact in the case of *all* believers; He could not have been thinking of a miracle that was going to be done, but the contrary. He was referring her to a great spiritual truth which held good for all. What was to be Martha's comfort regarding Lazarus? The hope that he, the friend and lover of Jesus had shared that spiritual life to which death was not a reality. It was in the hold of this mighty spiritual fact which regards death as a mere episode in the onward march of the soul, that Jesus sought to put those sorrowing women. And He was so human with it all. He could go with them to the grave, and weep with them in the anguish of a temporary separation.

The spiritual truth is a lift and a comfort, and it is the only real victory, but it does not take away all pain, nor dry the tears at once.

If Jesus gave them back their brother alive, it would be a great wonder; but the sorrow would

have to be faced again, for death would come back. Nor would the fact be of any use to us in similar circumstances: we could not hope for like comfort. But if Jesus by giving them a rich triumphant spiritual faith lifted them through pain and tears into victory at length, He did them the greatest good; and the fact remains a source of inspiration and help for ever to the children of faith in the places of fear, and shines a lamp of everlasting hope for them as they enter the valley of the Shadow of Death.

JUDAS ISCARIOT

By Rev. P. CARNEGIE SIMPSON, M.A.

JUDAS ISCARIOT

(St Mark iii. 19.)

We speak of the twelve disciples, but there were not twelve disciples. A disciple is one who learns the mind of his Master. Judas Iscariot was "*one of the twelve*," but he was never a disciple of Jesus Christ. In this single and simple fact is the key to the tragic story of the traitor.

A great deal has been written about Judas, and various very intricate and subtle theories have been spun of his character. The idea in some people's mind seems to be that the life of the most infamous man in history must be explained only by extraordinary considerations. But this is a mistaken assumption. The way to death is a broad way. The lost soul—even if he be a Judas—needs no subtle theories to explain how he was lost. There is something artificial and untrue to life in elaborate and ingenious accounts of the tragedy of Judas: his own account of it, if he had confessed it, would have been something much simpler. And it may be added, that a true account of Judas must be

stern and solemn. There are theories of his character which would whitewash his guilt, and make him rather a merely mistaken than a lost man. No picture of Judas is true, the effect of which is to minimise the terrible words about him that "*it were better for that man if he had never been born.*"

Let us, then, glance over his story, and try to read it as it is written, at once plainly, so as to need no artificial light to make it intelligible, and yet also darkly, with an awful doom.

The first distinctive fact we know about Judas is that he joined Christ's company. It is not conceivable that he would have done this without some elements of good in his motives, possibly even preponderating in them. But we are only too clearly told of at least one thing in his character, which developed even in his discipleship, and proved a canker in it. Judas was mercenary. This was a characteristic, not only of his nationality, but of the particular district of Jewism to which he belonged. He was of Kerioth—a Judean, therefore, and not, as were the other disciples, Galilean. The two districts have marked physical and geographical differences, and their inhabitants also differed in character. "The Galileans," said a verse in the Talmud, "were more anxious for honour than for money; but the reverse was true of the Judeans." It would be unjust to stigmatise Judas as mercenary merely on the strength of a generalisation such as

this, but the definite facts and statements in the gospel narrative make it clear, that only too well did he sustain this evil reputation of the district of his birth. His niggardliness appears from the way in which he grudged the box of spikenard which a grateful love lavished on Jesus; while his actual dishonesty is affirmed in the statement, that he stole from the common funds of the apostolic company, of which he had become the treasurer.

It may he asked: How did such a man—a man both ungenerous and even unprincipled—ever think of joining the fortunes of Jesus? I have said that doubtless there were some good motives in his doing so, but it is not difficult to see that there was that about the call of the new Messiah which would appeal to the unworthy side of Judas's nature. We must never allow ourselves to forget that every Jew imagined that the Messiah's kingdom would be a political kingdom. To the more spiritually minded it was a moral kingdom too, but to them as well as to others it was "*a restoring again of the kingdom to Israel*" out of the usurping hands of Rome. All the disciples looked for this — almost to the very end. And among them, Judas thought of it, and therefore the prospect of what we might call "the sweets of office" rose before his mind. One need not make too much of this. And there was in it nothing morally wrong. It was in what followed that this, which Judas had in his mind in

common with all the disciples, became in his case his ruin. As I have already said, he was never a disciple. Let me explain.

All the disciples had this material expectation regarding the Messiah. Now, we know that Jesus utterly disappointed this. He refused to be made King. He set up no political propaganda. He declared that His kingdom was not of this world. And—though reluctantly and very slowly—eleven of the disciples learned this new programme, their old ideas clung to their minds, but still they too learned the Master's mind. They had a personal devotion to Him which was stronger than any political disappointment. It was hard for Peter and John to give up the idea of thrones on the Messiah's right hand and left, but at any rate one thing was sure—they never could give *Him* up!

But with Judas it was otherwise. His loyalty received a shock when he found that Jesus would not follow paths that led to material success and political power. His disappointment proved greater than his devotion. When he joined the following of Jesus, this Judean may very well have had some personal attachment and attraction towards Him; but if so, this was only one tie among others which were more selfish and material. And now, when Jesus deliberately broke all ties to Himself which were of the lower kind, and made a personal love to Him, and a learning of His mind, the *one* reason

why His followers should hold on to Him, Judas reconsidered his position. He began to realise that to cast in his lot with Jesus was turning out to be something different from what he had expected. When the popular prophet, round whom multitudes were thronging, and who seemed to be the Man of the day and of the future, said, "*Follow Me*," Judas obeyed. The acceptance involved no great sacrifice, and contained the prospect of real gain. But when the Master, the crowds now growingly hostile, and the future uncertain and even ominous, said "*Learn of Me*"—learn to seek first the kingdom of God *in My sense of that word*, a sense that does not mean earthly honour and power and riches, Judas hesitated. He felt he had made a mistake in ever becoming one of this Man's following. They had different ideas of things. And so Judas refused to learn of Jesus—to be really His *disciple*.

Probably matters remained in this state for some time. He remained with the company of Jesus. No definite reason emerged to precipitate his departure. But he did not remain the same man. Constant intercourse must result either in an increase or a diminution of intimacy. During this time, while the others were getting to know Jesus better, learning His thoughts and accepting His aims, Judas was drifting away and getting more and more out of sympathy with it all. He was still of the Twelve, but he was the outsider among the disciples.

At last, things developed so as to bring matters between Jesus and him to a crisis. It was at Bethany. Jesus persisted in setting His face to go to Jerusalem. The city was now bitterly hostile, and to go there meant for Him and for His company danger, and perhaps death. The disciples knew this. Thomas did not disguise it when he said, "Let us go to Jerusalem that we may die with Him." Judas heard Thomas say that. He made no remark, but that night he did not sleep. He had a question to answer. How long he was going to keep up this farce of discipleship with Jesus—a farce that now threatened to develop into a tragedy?

Why should he go to Jerusalem and die with Jesus? Why should he? What had Jesus given him that in return he should imperil his life? Jesus had brought him nothing but disillusionment. By this time, they should have been the favourite ministers of a popular monarch: instead of that, they were involved in a discredited faction which was now in imminent peril of bringing down on its leader and His associates death itself. Judas made up his mind that certainly he for one was not going to put his head in a trap for Jesus' sake—of all men.

Why did he not simply desert that night? Ah, why indeed did he not? But Judas was not merely disappointed: he was bitter. Desertion might have been enough if he had only been the former, but to the bitter "revenge is sweet." Now, why was Judas

thus bitter against Jesus? There was a moral reason for that. For days, and weeks, and months, he had been living a false life in the very presence of the searching purity of Jesus. He was therefore constantly resisting good—good in its most powerful, most convincing, most unanswerable expression. Therefore he came to *hate* it. Appeals of the good which are weak and ineffective, a bad man may resist only with a kind of contempt. But appeals of good which your conscience cannot answer and yet cannot evade, a bad man comes to hate. Judas could neither evade the purity of Jesus nor answer it, and he came to hate Him. All that most devilish kind of hate revived in his heart that night, and he went forth, slipped through the dark olives, entered the city early in the morning, not a deserter merely, but the betrayer. He made his bargain with the priests. He took any price. He could have named any figure for the betrayal of Jesus, and, if it had been the ordinary mercenary man of Kerioth who was doing it, he would not have lost his chance of making a good bargain. But it was a man whose heart was flamed with satanic bitterness against the Holy One of God. It was not the money he wanted, it was the blood. He took, without bargain, the price of a mere slave, when he might have held out for a ransom. It was not, I say again, the money he wanted, it was the blood of the Holy One.

This was the Judas to whom before the Supper,

Jesus said: "*Do it—quickly!*" Could any words more terribly show how utterly and hopelessly he was alienated from Jesus. What a word of despair to come from the Saviour—that He should hurry this lost man to his sin.

And this was the Judas—bitter and now hardened—who betrayed Jesus with a kiss. The perfidy of the act, the shocking callousness of it, the shameless cynicism of it make that deed one of the most graphic instances on record of the hardening power of deliberate sinning in the face of light. As one says, who had only too sad reason to know the truth of his words,

> "It hardens all within
> And petrifies the feeling."

I shall refer in only two or three sentences to the tragic sequel of this—the traitor's remorse and death. The accounts of this in the gospel narrative and in the Book of Acts are somewhat divergent, but the facts of the revulsion of feeling in the mind of Judas and of his violent end stand out clearly. His distress of mind is sometimes taken to show that Judas did not really mean to betray Jesus to death, but only, as it had been said, to force His hand and compel him to come out as a political Messiah, strong enough to meet His enemies, and so on. The remorse of Judas needs no such explanation. For one thing, a bad deed looks to its doer very different

when it is done, compared with what it looked merely in proposal. Of Nero's murder of his mother, Tacitus says that after the crime was carried out the enormity of it was understood. So was it with the crime of Judas. He had hit out at Jesus in his bitterness and hatred, considering the awfulness of what he was doing as little as he calculated its market value, and when he saw the thing he had actually done, even his soul shuddered. And there was more than this in his remorse. His words to the High Priest show a sickening sense of failure in his heart. He had thought of this blow to get his triumph over Jesus. But in the very moment of what should have been his triumph, the unassailable innocence of Jesus rose up before him, and he felt all his cleverness and bitterness could never even touch that. He had not triumphed over Jesus. Even captive, bound, reviled, Jesus was utterly out of his power to harm. Judas had struck only at himself. The sense of the sublime heavenly superiority of Jesus to anything that could be done to Him, and the sense of the unutterable and infernal degradation of himself, filled Judas with a helpless despair, and he rushed forth to a dark and dreadful death.

Many warning lessons rise out of this tragic story, but I shall take only one on the line of the view of Judas, as a man who was one of the Twelve, but was never a disciple.

The way Judas was lost was by a daily falseness and disloyalty to Christ. To the outward eye, his betrayal of his Master seemed a sudden fall. Doubtless, it stunned the other disciples when they saw it. But it was not sudden. It was prepared for, not merely by the repeated pilferings of the bag, but also by his far oftener repeated secret refusals to obey the voice of his Master, who would have led him daily to higher things. Is there ever a sudden fall? Now and then, we are scandalised by the unexpected news that some one, prominent in Church or State, has fallen into some great sin. We call it a sudden fall, but, I ask, Is there ever a sudden fall? Is it not sudden only as a dynamite outrage is sudden—unlooked for by us, but the result of long, secret, underground preparation? It is by daily private refusals of Christ and yieldings to sin that we pave the way for, when circumstances are ripe for it, some great and awful act of sin like that of Judas.

And, further, all this went on in Judas in the very presence of Jesus Himself, went on in a man who had to do with Jesus every day. With a meaning deeper than the old Latin poet dreamed of, we may say of the man that he saw goodness, and pined away because he turned from it. Surely there is a warning here which none of us can afford to neglect. We are with Christ and the things of Christ constantly—in Church life and work, and in all the concerns of the evangel. In this very place, in the very

holiest circle on earth, this man Judas sank into hell. It is often said, and truly, that there is a way from the darkest sin to Christ; but it is also true that the false soul finds a way even from the very presence of the gospel to his ruin. You remember Bunyan's remark at the close of the *Pilgrims' Progress* about the end of poor Ignorance: "Then I saw that there was a way to Hell even from the gates of Heaven."

The only thing that would have saved Judas was that he should really have become the disciple of Jesus. We are "*of the twelve*"—that is, of Christ's company, of the Church. Are we disciples of Jesus? A man who comes to learn Christ's mind—about life, about sin, about salvation, about God, about himself, about everything—is His disciple. The disciple may fall like Peter, but he cannot be lost like Judas.

ST THOMAS

By Rev. Principal WALTER F. ADENEY, D.D.

ST THOMAS

THE word "Thomas" is the Aramaic for "twin," as "Didymus" is the Greek. Therefore it is not a proper name, and we do not know the actual name of the apostle to whom it is attached as a descriptive title in the New Testament. All sorts of quaint legends have sprung up out of this simple title. Strangely enough there was a wide-spread tradition that Thomas was a twin brother of Jesus Christ. Then there was a tradition that he had a twin sister named Lysia. Dr Rendel Harris has combined his great learning with much ingenuity, in tracing these legends through successive ages and over widespread areas, showing how they came to blend with ancient indigenous pagan myths, especially the story of Castor and Pollux. The twinship runs in various channels. Again and again appear "Florus and Laurus the patron saints of the horse, the great twin brothers to whom the Dorians pray." Then the martyrs Protasius and Gervasius are sucked into the stream, the assonance of names indicating that they

are regarded as twins. Fascinating as this pursuit of Church tradition over the region of ancient folk-lore may be, it does not help us to understand much about the apostle as he really lived. For this knowledge we must go to the Gospels, and to the Gospels only, nor are they very prolific of information on the subject. Apart from the Fourth Gospel we should know next to nothing about Thomas. But that Gospel, in which he figures as a prominent apostle, throws a series of flashes of light on his character, so that he lives to us to-day with as distinct an individuality as any of his companions.

Thomas appears in all the lists of the Apostles. But we have no account of his call. In Matthew's arrangement of the Twelve as couples he is associated with Matthew—"Thomas and Matthew the publican' (Matt. x. 3); and this fact has led to the suggestion that possibly the two were twins. But that is not likely, because in the case of two earlier instances the relationship of brotherhood is stated—"Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew *his brother*"—"James the son of Zebedee, and John *his brother*." If there were another pair of brothers it would be natural to go on and read, "Thomas and Matthew *his brother*." It must suffice, therefore, to know that Thomas happened to be a twin; his title—"nickname" we might call it—got attached to him probably because he had a very common name, such as Jude, as it appears in his Apocryphal *Acts*. Then the designation

"twin" would distinguish him from other men named Jude, of whom there were many.

But now, for our study of this apostle we must turn to the Fourth Gospel. There he appears on four occasions, each of intense interest. Great injustice has been done to Thomas by neglecting the two earlier scenes, and giving attention solely to the later. Thus he is thought of simply as the doubter, and the phrase "a doubting Thomas" has become proverbial. Thomas was much more than a doubter; and certainly his was not that chill spirit commonly associated with the title "sceptic." The first scene in which he becomes prominent is in the narrative of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Jesus is in Peræa, on the further side of the Jordan, out of the reach of the Jewish Council at Jerusalem now bent on effecting His destruction. It is the scene of John the Baptists' activity, when he was baptizing multitudes in the river. Here Jesus Himself had submitted to the rite; here, therefore, He had consecrated Himself to His ministry. And now that ministry is drawing to a close—a premature close, as it must appear to all His friends, for it has lasted little more than two years, and Jesus is still a young man, just in His prime. But the career that had opened full of promise, joyous, exultant, most welcome to the people, is now darkened with disappointment, almost to despair. There, at a safe distance, in the season of quiet waiting, the lull before the storm, Jesus is carrying

on a ministry in comparative seclusion, chiefly devoted to the training of His intimate disciples. In the midst of this work a messenger arrives with distressing news from His friends at Bethany. Lazarus is ill, in imminent danger. The sisters do not ask Jesus to come over to their aid. They know how perilous that would be. But we can read between the lines, and see that they are cherishing a fond hope that He will come as soon as He hears of their trouble. We can scarcely call this selfish on their part, except as all keen domestic anxiety tends to be selfish, seeing for the moment only its own circle of agony. Love torn by grief cannot stay to look beyond the one object of both emotions. But, whether expected or not, Jesus determines to go. With Him the cry of need is an imperative. It always is such to unselfish love.

The disciples expostulate. The last time He was at Jerusalem the Jews were trying to stone Him. Bethany is but two miles from the city, a suburban village. Will He venture into this neighbourhood again? As well go to meet a howling pack of wolves. Jesus is not to be moved. His friends have never succeeded in moving Him from any determination of duty. Peter tried it once—when He first announced that He would be rejected and killed; and Peter brought down on his own head one of the most scathing rebukes that ever fell from his Lord's lips. The lesson was not forgotten; nobody ventures

to try to hinder Him now in the tone of Peter at Cæsarea. But they all see the gravity of Christ's decision. It staggers them; those usually foremost among them are dumbfounded. Then an unwonted voice is heard. It does not come from any one in the inner group, the three who usually take the lead and speak as representatives of their brethren. It is Thomas who breaks the painful silence saying to his fellow-disciples, "*Let us also go, that we may die with Him.*"

It has been customary to point to this utterance as an indication of despondency. On the strength of it, when Thomas is not called "the doubting disciple," he is singled out as "the despondent disciple." Is this quite fair? Is there any evidence that the other disciples were a particle more hopeful? Nay, as regards the matter of his saying, was Jesus Himself more hopeful? Jesus had told His friends before this that He would have to die when He went up to Jerusalem. Thomas takes no more gloomy a view of the situation than his Master had taken. Indeed, he simply accepts Christ's own prediction, and bases his proposal upon it. And he was right in his anticipation. It is true Jesus did not die immediately He went up to Judea on this errand of mercy. There was another brief respite. But Jerusalem meant death sooner or later, and it was not long before the net was drawn round the Victim, and His own forecast verified. Jesus did die in Jerusalem only

two or three months after Thomas had spoken of the coming event. We may even say that his words showed his faith and insight. Thomas had now accepted what Peter had previously rejected. The notion that Jesus should suffer and die had been repudiated by the leading apostle with indignation; it was accepted by his humbler companion with settled resignation. Much had happened in the interval; the signs of malignant opposition had come thicker and surer; all could now see the brooding thunder-cloud, mounting up from the horizon, and fast spreading overhead.

But now there is another side to Thomas's utterance that gives it an entirely different character. Instead of taking it as a confession of despondency we may treat it as a note of heroism. It is a bugle call to his shrinking comrades. They are terror-stricken at their Master's determination, frozen into silence by fear. Thomas breaks the cowardly silence. There is no denying it, Jerusalem spells death. But Jesus will face this fate that awaits Him there. Then He must not go alone. His little remnant of followers, the few faithful disciples still left when so many have forsaken Him and fled, must not desert Him in this desperate extremity. To follow Him still would seem to involve sharing His fate. Be it so, thinks Thomas. Is He to die? Then let us die with Him. Christ's courage is infectious, and Thomas is the first to catch the

infection. From him it spreads through all the circle of disciples. Braced by this one man's example they too follow Jesus, making straight for the centre of peril, for the goal of doom. That is heroic. For the moment, at least, Thomas is a hero, and his heroism passes into the whole band. Under his inspiring influence they all feel ready to leap into the jaws of death.

It would have been happier for the reputation of Thomas and his friends if we did not know the sequel, for that proved to be a miserable anti-climax. When the Shepherd was smitten, the sheep were scattered; and for all his bold words Thomas was caught in the sheep-like panic. When "*they all forsook Him and fled*," Thomas took part in the ignominious flight. Did he think then of his bold resolve made when far away in safe Peræa? Probably not. In panics, people think of nothing but how to save their own lives. But shameful as this failure is when the testing moment comes, we must not let the shadow of it obliterate all that was good and even glorious in Thomas's proposal. That was honestly meant, and faithfully adhered to. The solemn resolve was taken and acted on. The disciples, Thomas, of course, included, went up with Jesus to Bethany. There was real courage in that; though later on this courage gave way, and then the issue was very ignominious.

The next appearance of Thomas is near the

opening of our Lord's last discourse with His disciples; we meet with it early in the wonderful fourteenth chapter of John, one of the choicest gems of Scripture. Jesus, being a true Teacher, never objected to the interruption of His discourses by listeners who were anxious to have a clear understanding of His meaning. This chapter contains three such interruptions on the part of three of the less prominent disciples—Thomas, Philip, and Jude. John seems to have made a point of selecting incidents bringing into notice comparatively obscure disciples, of whom otherwise we should hear little or nothing. The first of the three here introduced is Thomas. As this disciple had taken the lead in the heroic proposal to go up to Jerusalem and die with Christ, so it was he who raised the question as to whither Christ was going. The plain course before Him seemed to be the road to death. That Thomas had seen clearly, and he was ready, as he supposed, to tread its grim track with his Master. But now Jesus seems to be speaking in mysterious language. In the correct text His words are, "*Whither I go ye know the way.*" The disciples cannot see the goal. The grand consummation is beyond the vail. But the journey thither is apparent. This is puzzling to Thomas. How can you know which road to take if you do not know where you are going? Here is part of the difference between walking by faith and walking by sight. If you do

not know whither a road leads, if you cannot *see* what you are going to, the ordinary method of seeking an end in what you do is not available. Then what can be the rule for the choice of the route? We must not make life a mere ramble, subject only to the caprice of the moment. But there is a way between the definite aim at a visible end and the purposeless meandering, the butterfly-like flitting hither and thither, that knows no law but idle fancy. This is the course of obedience. It is the way of a higher will. The end is with God who knows all, plans the route, and orders the goal. If He is the Guide, the life that follows His leading must be right. To trust Him and go His way, is neither to walk with a clear vision of the end nor to drift aimlessly. Now Jesus is speaking of His own course. The final issue of it was beyond the grasp of His disciples. Most, if not all, could see the first stage —death. But death was not the end. Some may have caught a dim vision of a resurrection, when Jesus spoke of this; but the despair that followed the Crucifixion shows that it did not mean anything very real to them. Then the Ascension, the glory, the reign, the world-wide grace and power of the ever-living Christ, were all beyond them. These we know were some of the things to which Jesus was going. Others are as much beyond the range of our perception as they were out of the reach of the thoughts of the disciples. The end is too great,

too wonderful, too mysterious, to be comprehended. But the way should be understood. Such seems to be our Lord's meaning. To Thomas, however, as perhaps to some of us to-day, it was by no means obvious.

Can we see any indication of character in this disciple's perplexity? Why was it just Thomas, of all men, who raised the difficulty? Taking this scene in conjunction with its predecessor, and also with that more significant occasion when we next meet him, we may perhaps infer that Thomas had, what we in England call, a matter-of-fact mind. He seems to have been the apostle who approached most nearly to the English type of character. Slow to see a truth, but frank to confess it when once it is admitted, blunt, outspoken, courageous, loyal, he illustrates at once the merits and the limitations of our insular disposition. New ideas dawn slowly on such a mind, especially if they are not in the region of the visible and tangible. On the other hand, a man like Thomas is not content with vagueness, nor will he be put off with words. Too many people view all things through a mental haze. They cannot tell what they see and what they do not see. It would be impossible for them to make a clear confession of faith, for they do not know what they believe, although they honestly think they believe all that it is right and proper to believe. Such faith is nearly worthless. At all events it is blind. But worse than

this, there are people who are content with mere phrases that convey no meaning whatever to their minds. It is enough for them that the words sound pious, or are familiar in religious associations, or come with the sanction of venerated authority. Thomas would never sink down to the mental indolence of such torpid minds. He would welcome Dr Johnson's famous choice to clear our minds of cant. Even if the words we hear are quite sincere and full of meaning, such as the words of Christ, if we cannot see the drift of them, and yet settle down in lazy satisfaction, we degrade them to the level of the unreal, and our use of them is no better than what Dr Johnson so justly stigmatised. There is a sickly state of mind which disgusts all healthy natures. To Thomas this would be an abomination. He may not be able to see far; but what he does see, he must see clearly. Within the area of clear vision, this is excellent; the honesty and mental energy it involves are wholly commendable. Its defect is in its reluctance to admit the existence of those objects that lie wrapped in the fog that it detests. After all, that is a very narrow mind which will not allow the being of truth to which it has not attained. But we must not accuse Thomas of this narrowness. He does not deny; he questions. Now to question is to seek for more light, even if, as in the case before us, the inquirer does not seem to have thought a satisfactory answer possible.

The two resurrection incidents, with which the name of Thomas is most frequently associated, further illustrate these characteristics of his nature. On the first occasion when Jesus appeared to the Apostles after His resurrection, Thomas was not with them. His failure to see his Lord and be convinced like the others was due to his absenting himself from the meetings of the brotherhood. This absence may have been accidental or unavoidable. If it was due to sheer despondency, he had himself to blame for missing a great privilege. We can well understand that the disciple who had been bold to offer to go up to Jerusalem to die with Jesus would have been in the depths of gloom and humiliation, when reflecting on his weakness in joining the general panic. Had Jesus been seized as Thomas expected, when He went up to Bethany to rescue Lazarus, it is likely that His disciple would have been true to his loyal proposal. But some time had elapsed, and it is difficult to keep the martyr spirit long on the strain. Time wore down the fidelity of Cranmer. Time may have weakened Thomas's heroism. So he joined his comrades in their ignominious flight. After that, next to Peter, the second and more violent boaster, who had had a more shameful fall, Thomas must have been most ashamed in the after-reflection. Down-hearted, disconsolate, quite hopeless, he may have seen no use in keeping up the meetings of the brotherhood. Perhaps he felt some contempt for

what he would regard as a mere slavery to habit on the part of men of weaker intelligence. Most people run in grooves, and keep up old customs when they have outlived their justification. Thomas would have no patience with this brainless course. In his despondency he may have credited the assembling of the Apostles with no better reason. If so, he would have done it an injustice. Mutual affection would draw the brotherhood together for a time, even if no spark of the old hopes lingered during that desolate interval.

Whatever was the cause of Thomas's absence, it cost him the loss of the first interview with the risen Lord. But apart from this, had not Jesus promised a spiritual presence in the assembly of His people, assuring them that wherever two or three of them were met together in His name, He would be in the midst of them? Thomas missed that. All Christians who neglect the assembly of the Church, carelessly or wilfully, may expect to miss many blessings which can only be enjoyed in fellowship. Christianity is a social religion; it attains its perfection in brotherhood. With the solitary it shrinks and withers.

Although Jesus favoured Peter and James with private interviews, each for some special reason, He did not grant Thomas that rare privilege. His discipline required another process. If his fault were a lack of social sympathy, that fault must not be encouraged by a special favour in solitude. Per-

haps it may be added that the spiritual condition in which it would be even possible to see the risen Christ at all was not possible for Thomas while he held aloof from the brotherhood, possibly in sullen despair.

When he heard of what the other disciples had seen in his absence, Thomas could not believe it. He repudiated the notion as absurd. The vehemence of his language shows us how gladly he would have welcomed the news, if only he had been able to accept it as true. But to him it is too good to be true. He cannot submit to a delusion simply because it would be very delightful. He must have truth—truth at any price. For this, however, he declares that he will be satisfied with nothing less than the most convincing sense perception, the sense of touch. Excited people may be deluded by hallucinations, visions conjured by their own imaginations. So great a wonder as a resurrection is not to be believed because some people feel sure that they have seen an apparition of the dead man. They may have seen this. Thomas does not dispute the fact. For all that, he takes the vision to be no proof that the dead had actually returned from the grave. To be assured of this he must handle the body, put his finger in the nail-prints, his hand in the spear-thrust. The coarseness of these particulars seem to point to another requirement. It is not enough to be sure that there is a real body; Thomas wants proof that

this is the very body of Jesus. Otherwise some "medium" may be personating the dead. The words of Thomas read too harshly in our English versions, owing to the ambiguity of our use of the word "will," either for volition or for mere futurity. The Greek original has a simple future. Therefore, we must not put the emphasis on "will," and read, 'I *will* not believe," as though Thomas intimated an obstinate intention. The simple future, apart from purpose and intention, is all he suggests. He thinks that belief will not come to him till certain conditions are fulfilled.

Injustice is done to Thomas in many ways, but nowhere more flagrantly than at this point. He is called the doubter because he alone of the eleven apostles questioned the fact of his Lord's resurrection. But he was the only one who had not seen the risen Christ. For anything we know to the contrary, if he had been present, he would have been convinced; and for anything we know to the contrary, if any one of the others had been absent, that disciple would have been equally sceptical. As it is, none of them had believed the reports of previous appearances. What the women said appeared to them all but idle tales, and the appearance to Peter had only filled the rest with perplexity. It was Christ's appearance to them that convinced the eleven; on the next occasion, Thomas being present, he too was convinced. In all this, then, they seem to have been on a level as to

previous unbelief and the belief that came with the first sight of Christ. It may be that Thomas's different position was only due to the accident of circumstance. He was exceptional in not being present. Therefore he was also exceptional in not believing. How much scepticism and even unbelief on which the Church has looked so sternly, is really due to some misfortune of environment! how much peaceable acquiescence in established convictions has no merit, because it has been nursed in favourable circumstances, that have made it seem quite natural and simple and without any difficulties!

Thomas learns his lesson. The next time when the Apostles are met together, his place is not vacant. Thomas takes good care to be present now. That looks as though he were beginning to be expectant, or, at least, as though he had an open mind. Indeed, nothing would please him better than to be convinced. Then Jesus appears and immediately invites Thomas to make his experiment. The amazed disciple does nothing of the kind. The sight of Jesus is enough for him. All his doubt vanishes in a moment. In an ecstasy of joy he cries, "*My Lord and my God.*" No other disciple had ever made that great confession —not the most intimate: not Peter, who was the first to own Jesus as Christ; not John, who leaned on His bosom. Thomas "the doubter" is the first to pronounce the great word "God," the first to confess the full divinity of Christ. This rebound

from despair to faith carries the soul farther at one leap than the position reached by more placid minds after long experience. Here is the compensation of the questioning mind. The restlessness of dissatisfaction in the conventional or traditional is very painful. Doubt is always distressing, and when it is carried far into regions of vital importance, agonising. But when it is dispelled and sure conviction takes its place, that conviction is more clear and more assured than the faith of unquestioning minds. There is no faith so strong as that of a man who has fought his doubts and conquered them by honest means. Jesus says that there is a better faith than that to which Thomas had attained. It is the faith which dispenses with visible evidences. But here Thomas is in the same place as his ten fellow-apostles. They had all waited for ocular demonstration.

Clearness, certitude—these are the two conditions without which Thomas cannot be satisfied. They have their limitations. Life is encircled by mystery. Still, to aim at attaining them is manly and honest. In so far as that was his aim, Thomas is worthy of emulation as well as admiration. "Whatever the impression," says Marcus Aurelius, "make sure of certitude." Unfortunately, this is not always possible to us, and when it is not, a humble confession of ignorance is better than an impatient cry of doubt or unbelief, flung off in a tone that implies contempt for the easier faith of more docile minds.

Apocryphal literature has been busy with legends of Thomas that have little or no historical value. The so-called *Acts of Thomas* tell how he went as a missionary to India, was seized and sold as a slave, rose to a position of trust, received money for building a royal palace, spent this in alms for the poor, and told his astonished master that he had built him a palace in heaven. The "Christians of St Thomas" at Malabar claim the apostle as the evangelist of their country who died there as a martyr. Some of these stories are due to a confusion of names. The real Thomas of the Gospels does not reappear in the history. He would have been with his brethren at Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts, and have gone, we know not where, in the general scattering that occurred later. For us he remains only the apostle so vividly portrayed by a few touches in the Gospel of John, and our lessons of his life and character must be wholly drawn from that book.

JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD

By Rev. Principal WALTER F. ADENEY, D.D.

JAMES THE BROTHER OF THE LORD

TWO perplexing questions have been discussed concerning the personality of this James—first, as to the nature of his relationship to Jesus Christ; second, as to the identification of him with the author of the New Testament book that appears in our Bibles as *The General Epistle of James.* The former of these questions would have seemed very simple, if it had not been complicated with awkward theological considerations. The meaning of the title brother, when not employed in a secondary, metaphorical sense for a member of a confraternity, is birth from the same parents, or, at least, from one common parent. Therefore that is the meaning we should attach to it in the present case, unless some good reason to the contrary appeared, as when we read of "John the brother of James," "Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother." If this is not the meaning in the case before us, the burden of proof rests on those

who deny it. Why, then, should the usual sense of the expression be deemed inappropriate here? Two reasons are offered. The first is the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Here we are landed in the region of Church dogma. Of course, if the gospel history is to be judged from that standpoint, *cadit quæstio.* The Church has spoken, and there is an end of all controversy. But for those of us who feel free to look at it in the way of unbiassed historical investigation, this sort of reasoning is out of court. It begs the question; for if Jesus had a brother, or as the Gospels seem to imply, both brothers and sisters, there is no ground for the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of His mother. The other reason proposed is the unseemliness of the idea that she, who had been honoured with the motherhood of the Son of God, should ever have had any other children, that after Jesus any one else should be born of the same mother. A feeling of reverence for Christ, rather than a desire to honour the Virgin, is the ground of this plea. Still it may have no bearing on actual facts. He who humbled Himself to become a man, and who shared the lowly lot of human life on earth, as the most brotherly of men, would not have felt dishonoured by having natural brothers and sisters. At all events, again it must be said, if we are prepared for a genuine study of the facts of history, this consideration must not be allowed to bias our judgment.

But now let us see what alternatives are proposed. Two, in the main, have received the greatest support among those who reject the simple theory of natural brotherhood.

1. According to Jerome and others who have followed on similar lines, James and the other "brothers" of Jesus referred to in the Gospels were His cousins, sons of a sister of the Virgin Mary. It is stated that among the women witnessing the Crucifixion was Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses (Mark xv. 40). But we read in another place that there were by the Cross, "*His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene*" (John xix. 25). This has been taken to mean that "*his mother's sister*" was the same person as "*Mary the wife of Clopas.*" Then, owing to similarity in the Aramaic forms, Clopas has been identified with Alphæus. Now in the list of apostles we meet with a certain "*James the son of Alphæus.*" This man, therefore, is claimed to be the nephew of the Virgin Mary. Again, James, Joses, Judas, and Simon are the names of the four brothers of Jesus (Mark vi. 3). The first two of these names are the same as the names of the sons of the Mary who is taken on this hypothesis to be the sister of the Virgin. Other curious coincidences in the lists of names have been pointed to as confirming the argument. But we need not follow the intricate discussion, since there are three strong objections to the conclusion indi-

cated by it, viz.:—(1) There is no evidence of the word "brother" ever being used for a cousin. (2) The theory has the improbability of two sisters being named Mary. (3) It represents one, at least, of the brothers of Jesus as included in the number of the Twelve, while we have the express statement that His brothers did not believe in Him during His earthly ministry (John vii. 5). For these reasons Jerome's theory does not appear to be at all probable.

2. Next, we have a theory maintained by Epiphanius and many others in the Church of the Fathers, and advocated in our own day by Lightfoot, according to which the brothers of Jesus were the sons of Joseph by a former marriage, and, therefore, the nominal half-brothers of Jesus, though really not related to Him at all, since it accepts the Gospel statement of the virgin birth of our Lord. This theory avoids all three objections to Jerome's hypothesis. But still the burden of proof rests with those who urge it. What have they to say for it in preference to the more natural reading of the history? Dr Lightfoot accepts it because of what he thinks a fatal objection to the idea that Mary had other sons besides Jesus. This is that our Lord on the Cross committed His mother to the charge of John. He thinks that could not have occurred if she had had sons in whose care she might have lived. But we do not know all the circumstances of that sad and desolate home.

Previous to this Mary had been accompanied with "the brothers of the Lord," however they may have been related to Him or her. This seems to imply that she lived with them as one family. Therefore, explain it how we may, we are here confronted with the fact that the arrangement is broken up, and Jesus sees His mother left unprotected, unless He entrusts her to one of His disciples. May we not suppose that the unbelief of the brothers lay at the root of the difficulty? Could this have been seen by Mary, and yet all have gone on smoothly in the home? Overwhelmed with grief, she would scarcely find the household that rejected her first-born a haven of rest at this dreadful crisis. It would be better that she should be with a true sympathiser, even if he were only a nephew, as John appears to have been. But if some such explanation as this might obviate the difficulty which Dr Lightfoot felt to be inevitable, why should we resist the natural interpretation of the narrative? The whole course of the story points in this direction. Jesus is called Mary's "first-born." Now, it is true that the term among the Jews pointed to the special honour of the eldest son, quite apart from the question of other children following, that it was a sort of title, the word *first*, here not necessarily suggesting that there must be a second, at least, as it would suggest in our language. Still the word is used in view of a succession. For instance, in regard to the larger family of God, Jesus is called "*the first-*

born among many brethren." Besides, if it were understood that Mary had no other children, and that a certain sanctity of the situation required this, as the Church dogma maintained, is it likely that so ambiguous a term, one so likely to be taken with its natural implication, would have been used? And then, if, after meeting this expression with regard to Jesus, we read of His brothers and sisters, and find them repeatedly in association with His mother, is it not the reasonable conclusion—apart from the logical prepossessions—that Mary was their mother also? Finally, why should we surrender to the theological prepossessions in which, after all that is said, the only grounds for giving up the natural interpretation are found? They seem to be relics of the age of asceticism. They dishonour marriage. They unduly separate Christ from other men. Their trend is monkish. But there was nothing monkish in Christ. He honoured marriage. He associated Himself freely with mankind. It was not in Him to stand aloof, in His Divine dignity, from a natural family relationship.

Concluding then that, when we read of James as the brother of the Lord, we are to take this in the natural sense of the words, and understand, at all events, that he was a half-brother of Jesus, that Mary was his mother, let us see where this idea leads us. The first conclusion may be a little disappointing. We might expect every member of that Nazareth

household to exhibit certain rare qualities. But there does not appear to have been anything very remarkable about James. He was given a position of unique honour in the Jerusalem Church; but evidently this was on the ground of his relationship to the Master, not because of his own merits. We should not be surprised at this. Sometimes we meet with gifted families; but not less frequently the whole genius of a family is concentrated in one member, and there is nothing whatever remarkable about the brothers and sisters of the great man. Who knows anything of brothers and sisters of Dante, or Shakespeare, or Milton? Napoleon made the most of his relations; but none of them developed genius. Charles Wesley was a useful ally to his great brother; the Tennyson family contained two poets besides the laureate. And yet these more or less conspicuous brothers are quite of the second rank. Experience does not show that, if we looked on Jesus merely as a man of rare religious genius, we should have a right to expect to see scintillations of the same genius in the Nazareth family from which He came. But Jesus was more than a man of rare religious genius. If we believe in the Incarnation, we cut the line of heredity. There is something so transcendently superhuman in this fact, that the nearest relations who did not share in it are as separated from it as all the rest of mankind. The brothers of Jesus, equally with the most insignifi-

cant persons among ourselves, could have exclaimed, had they truly known Him—

> "Lord, Thou in all things like wast made
> To us, yet free from sin;
> Then how unlike to us, O Lord,
> Replies the voice within."

We cannot but think it an unspeakably great privilege for James and the other brothers and sisters to have been brought up in the same home from their infancy, and in closest family relationship with Mary's "Holy Child Jesus." That it was a beautiful household, well governed, happily trained, we may well believe. She who was honoured above all women by being privileged to be the mother of Jesus, and to train Him in His childhood, must have been a good mother to all her children. The presence of her sons, on more than one occasion with her, seems to indicate that the domestic ties were close and warm, that it was a happy, united household till an awful tragedy temporarily scattered it. But more we cannot say. That the influence of the Perfect Child shed a radiance of unseen joy and an atmosphere of purity all around Him wherever He went, is what we should all have expected. And yet the family may have been slow to perceive its rare significance. Evidently there was nothing outwardly abnormal about His life and action. The foolish legends of apocryphal gospels are quite out of harmony with the probability suggested by the

silence of the authentic records of Christ's life. Therefore that other hymn is wrong when it says:

"That simple, lovely, wondrous life
Betrayed itself from heaven;
He was the child that should be born,
The Son that should be given.

"He grew in stature and in praise,
By honest hearts adored,
Till in that home where He was born,
His brothers called Him Lord."

The secret did not "betray itself"; His brothers did not call Him Lord.

Commenting on the proverb that "nobody is a hero to his valet," Carlyle explains it on the ground that the valet *is* a valet, not that he knows the hero intimately, but that he looks at the hero from a valet's point of view. Familiarity with the good and great should not breed contempt. Familiarity with Jesus did not breed contempt in John. The most intimate disciple of Christ was the man who ultimately attained to the loftiest conception of his Master's nature. Still this came late. For a long time the everyday life of Jesus, as a man among men, must have acted rather as a veil than as a revelation with regard to His Divine nature. Ultimately people saw that the mystery of the Godhead had been made manifest to them in the flesh; but not at first. Certainly this was not to be seen in the days of childhood, or during any part of the thirty years of

obscurity. Therefore we need not regret so greatly that we live far down the ages from the time when Jesus was on earth. His contemporaries, His intimates, His brothers and sisters had difficulties to overcome, before they could perceive who He really was, that have been largely removed from before our eyes.

In the Nazareth home, then, James did not come to have any very abnormal idea of his elder Brother. Even after He had emerged from privacy, and right through His public ministry, when many hailed Him as a Prophet, and some few secretly acknowledged Him as the Messiah, James with the other brothers stood aloof. It is not simply that they did not believe in His divinity. Nobody, not even Peter or John, did that during His lifetime; they did not believe in *Him;* did not believe that He was the Christ, or even that He was a prophet, a teacher sent from God. They must have known Him too well to have shared the theory of the Jewish authorities—in which they could scarcely have honestly believed—that He was an impostor. But they thought He was a self-deluded dreamer, needlessly courting danger, who ought to be saved from Himself. So once they said that He was "*beside Himself*," either actually imagining that He must have been out of His mind, or wishing to shield Him from the consequences of His dangerous utterances by intimating that He was not responsible for them; and, on another occasion, they

sent a message through the crowd from His mother, as well as from themselves, asking Him to come to them, with the evident intention of rescuing Him. They failed in this act of well-meant but really impertinent interference; and the result was that apparently He disowned them, claiming all who did God's will as His brethren, His very nearest relations. The reply was more than a rebuke for the moment. It flashed out a new far-reaching principle of the kingdom of heaven. There are ties even closer than blood-relationship. We see it in the friendship of a David and Jonathan; we see it in the love of man and woman; we see it in common enthusiasm for a great cause. Jesus recognises it in the union of souls for the high pursuit of obedience to God's will. Nepotism under the Papacy was the blight of the Church, and wherever it is found it degrades the family relationship, as well as the public duty into which it indecently obtrudes that relationship. Family affections and their claims are for the sanctity of the home. They are coarsened and life is narrowed when they are dragged into the glare of the outer world, and strained to cover the large demands of public service. Jesus never took any steps to advance His family on the ground of His own unique position, because He knew that He was not there for any personal ends, but solely for doing God's will, and thereby bringing blessing to mankind. For the same reason He could not permit the most intimate

domestic relationship to interfere with His high call and its fulfilment. This may help to explain the coldness of His brethren towards Him. A mother's love and faith could bear the painful rebuff which brothers and sisters would be likely to resent with a feeling of wounded affection.

The Resurrection, which meant so much to the disciples, was even more to one of the brothers of Jesus who was not a disciple. Only this one now comes before us in a new light. We hear no more of the other brothers and the sisters. There is no evidence that these near relations of Jesus ever changed their attitude of sceptical aloofness, although they were no longer able to attempt any interference with their strange Elder Brother. But this one brother, James, was won over to faith. It is commonly supposed that the great change was a direct result of the appearance of Christ to him. That appearance must have had the most profound significance for James, as it had for the disciples. But to suppose that James was an unbeliever until he saw his Brother risen from the dead, and that the miracle by itself convinced him, is contrary to the Divine method of inspiring faith, and also contrary to the character of all the other manifestations of the risen Lord. It is not the teaching of the New Testament that faith is to be got by signs. Jesus refused signs when asked to produce them in order to convince the unbelieving, and He taught that this very sign, a return from the

dead, would not convince. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Abraham says of the five brethren, "*If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead*" (Luke xvi. 31). It would exactly conflict with this principle for James to be persuaded by the mere wonder of the Resurrection. Then it would be contrary to the character of all the other manifestations of Jesus after His death. In every other case the appearance was only witnessed by His own believing disciples. Jesus did not present Himself risen from the dead before Caiaphas and Pilate to confound them, before the Jews to their amazement, before any people to open their eyes to His true nature. If the sight of His presence would convince and convert, why was it not flashed over the world, that all the world might be brought to conviction and conversion? Evidently this is not the method of Providence. There must be a spiritual sympathy for the truth to be effectively received, and it would seem that this spiritual sympathy was necessary for the perception of the risen Christ. At all events, the privilege of seeing Him was only given to those who possessed it. Then this mysterious sight worked its wonders on the soul of the beholder, restoring his faith and joy, and opening his eyes to new reaches in the revelation of the Gospel.

Now it is in accordance with these principles, so invariably followed in all other cases, and so inherently

harmonious with the spirit of Christ and His method, that we must understand Jesus to have appeared to James. There must have been something in James that made it possible for him to see the great wonder, as this was not possible for any of his brothers and sisters. They were left in the dark, because they were still blinded by essential unbelief. James was not; for if it had been the case with him He would never have been able to see the vision. At the end of Christ's life, he and he alone of the family stepped out of the chill circle of scepticism that had enclosed them all, in the direction of sympathy, if not of faith. If the Roman centurion was profoundly moved by what he saw in the death of Jesus, is it too much to suppose that those last dark hours may have stirred strange thoughts in the mind of His brother? James's name comes first in the list of the brethren. This indicates that he was the oldest of them. He came nearest to the great First-born in age. It is natural to suppose that he would have been the closest in sympathy, all along the least antipathetic of them, and, after the last scene, moved to genuine appreciation. Still this was not faith; much less was it confidence. None of the disciples had that in the dismal day or two of bewilderment and desolation that followed the death of their Lord, before they learnt the overwhelmingly marvellous fact that He had risen from the dead. That fact, or rather their own sight of it, did more than restore their drooping

faith in Him; it carried this on to new heights of assurance and comprehension. For James it was the birth of the real, satisfying faith. This view of James's position with regard to the Resurrection is confirmed by an extract from the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*, the most valuable of all our extra canonical sources for the life of Christ, which, unfortunately, has been lost and not yet recovered, but some fragments of which have been preserved by later writers. The fragment here referred to, is given by Jerome as follows: "The Lord after His resurrection appeared to James, who had sworn that he would not eat bread from the hour in which he had drunk the cup of the Lord till he saw Him risen from the dead. Jesus therefore took bread and blessed and brake it, and gave it to James the Just, and said to him, 'My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from the dead'" (*De Viris Illustribus*, 2). The story strikes us as apocryphal. If the identification of James the Lord's brother with James the son of Alphæus, one of the twelve apostles, is abandoned —and we saw a little earlier that it must be—then it is unhistorical to represent the Lord's brother as having been present at the Supper. Still the very existence of the legend points to the probability that there is some grain of truth in it; and if this be the case, the likelihood is that James felt drawn towards Jesus before the Resurrection, and was just in that wistful, sympathetic mood after the event which made

it possible for Jesus to manifest Himself to Him. From this time onward James seems to have cast in his lot with the company of the Christians at Jerusalem. In course of time he came to be the recognised head of the Church in that city, the head of the Mother Church, and therefore the man in the most honourable position among all the Christians. We have no information as to when or how he was placed in this position. No title is given to the office he held. There were elders in the Jerusalem Church; but James is never called an elder; nor is the title "bishop" given to him. Still we must not be slaves of words. In point of fact, James held at Jerusalem a position very similar to that of the several town bishops, or pastors, early in the second century, the position of the one pastor of a congregation. Although no reason is assigned why he should have been so placed at Jerusalem, his near relationship to Jesus seems to have been the cause. There is something pathetic in this; it is so hopelessly inadequate. Jesus has vanished; then the first place shall be held by His nearest relation. This is quite contrary to the tenor of what He said as to who were His brothers. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the narrow notion which led to the appointment of James was a mistake. He did not administer in the spirit of his Brother. He clung to Judaism more than any other leader of the Church. It is an error to suppose that he opposed Paul.

The apostle himself speaks of his personal friendliness of intercourse with James (Gal. i. 19). Still James never understood Paul, and he was used by narrower men, who went further and tried to hinder Paul's liberalising movement, in welcoming the heathen as on a common footing with Jews when once converted to Christ—first at Antioch, then in Galatia. It has been asserted that his more generous attitude in the Jerusalem Church discussion, when he advised admission of the Gentiles to the Church without keeping the law, is unhistorical, because not agreeing with St Paul's statements. But Lightfoot showed the error of this criticism. The narrative in Acts saying nothing about *eating* with Gentiles or putting them on a level with Jews. If we may accept his epistle as genuine—and this is not the place to enter on any discussion of it—we find there that James never once refers to the pre-existence of Christ, to the Atonement, to our Lord's death, or to His resurrection. Imagine such omissions in an epistle of Paul! On the other hand, this epistle contains more echoes of the teaching of Jesus than any other New Testament book, except the Gospels, that actually record this teaching. James seems to have imbibed and assimilated his Brother's ethical ideas, rather than the more profound theological teachings. A simple, true, strenuous, earnest soul, with no depth or breadth of thought, but a high aim to maintain in the

morale of the Church. Such seems to have been James the Lord's brother.

James, like his namesake the son of Zebedee, died as a martyr.

We have two accounts of the last scene, one by by Hegesippus, written about A.D. 160, the other in Josephus, the simpler and probably the more authentic. It happened during the interregnum between the death of Festus and the arrival of the new governor, Albinus. Here was an opportunity for the high priest to take action against the hated sect of the Nazarenes, with a severity that the Roman authorities would have prevented if they had been effectively officered. He seized James as the head of the Church at Jerusalem, and had him executed in the Jewish method, by stoning. Thus did the brother who was late in coming to faith finally prove his loyalty by martyrdom, and the teacher who seemed to be so deficient in his theology show himself in the hour of trial to be faithful unto death.

STEPHEN

By Rev. ALFRED ROWLAND, D.D., LL.B.

STEPHEN

PENTECOST was spring-time in the history of the Church. It was then that Christian life appeared in vigour and beauty, to the amazement of the onlookers, who imagined that every germ of it had perished in the cruel winter of persecution. But when seeds are sown thickly in fertile soil, they are not prevented from appearing at their appointed time because the frost has assailed the clods in which they are embedded; and the life Jesus Christ brought into the world had its resurrection in spite of all hindrances. The little group of men and women who believed in their risen Lord met for prayer, and while they were yet speaking, He heard and answered them. In gracious yet resistless power the Holy Spirit descended on them, and the effect was like that of warm showers in spring-time, for suddenly in fresh forms religious life asserted itself. The disciples began to preach with new power. Their hearers felt their consciences stirred by the same quickening Spirit, and at once they boldly

avowed themselves to be followers of Jesus Christ; so that the band of believers, a hundred and twenty strong, became an enthusiastic Church, numbering no less than five thousand members in Jerusalem alone.

The first practical difficulty which confronted these early Christians concerned the wise and just distribution of charity among the poor; and the Apostles, recognising the impossibility of attending to it personally—unless they neglected the ministry of the Word, for which they had been specially set apart—advised the Church to select "*seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom*," who should undertake this business, and among these Stephen became the most prominent. It is clear that these men were not "in deacons' orders," according to the Episcopalian idea, nor were they "deacons" in the sense denoted by that term in Congregational churches. Indeed they are not called deacons at all by the writer of the Acts, and their function was special and temporary; which is one of many signs that the Church, under the guidance of the Divine Spirit, is perfectly free to adapt its offices to its needs. Hence we find in the New Testament no mention of any accurately defined offices. If men were set apart, as they were on this occasion, for the distribution of money, they were not debarred thereby from giving public exhortation; while, even an apostle did not think it

beneath his dignity to earn a meal by fishing, or to make his livelihood for a time by weaving cilicium for tents. In that living and growing community there was flexibility and freedom, such as the Church would be the better for in our own day. But although offices in the Church, and methods of service, varied with time and place, the qualifications for filling any recognised position were the same for all. Nor can these qualifications ever be disregarded with impunity. When men were wanted simply to manage the distribution of money, it was required that they should be filled not only with wisdom, but with the Holy Spirit. And this principle still holds good, and must be applied all round. Therefore, one who is flippant and worldly, however clever, is not fitted to teach even an infant class. Another whose social and financial standing is all that can be desired, is not by that alone qualified to control the financial affairs of a church. And a popular, effective speaker, who may have the gift of drawing a vast audience, is not fitted to hold a pastorate if his character and reputation do not stand well. Disregard of these fundamental Christian principles, which are far more important than questions which divide Christians, such as the mode of baptism, or the institution of conference, Presbytery or Union, has wrecked many a church. Character is the base on which the Church rests, and weakness there involves weak-

ness all through. The early Christians were not forgetful of this. Under apostolic direction they selected "men of good repute," whose names stood high in business and in the congregation; honest and fearless, justice-loving men, clad in the panoply of righteousness, from whose polished surface the fiery darts of calumny glanced harmlessly aside. They chose men "*full of the Holy Ghost*," devout, unworldly, inspired men, who lived in such true communion with God that they heard His voice, and knew His will; and thus were enabled to speak and act with spiritual authority. And added to this, the chosen men were endued with "*wisdom*," with practical sagacity, and far-seeing statesmanship. They kept their tongues and tempers under control; they had capacity for managing difficult affairs; they could deal effectively with foolish men, and even with angry women; and they never deified their own prejudices or preferences, as if they infallibly represented the changeless truth of God. The elect of the Church should ever be the elect of God; those who are rich in that inspired wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, and easy to be entreated. If only the Church had always chosen such men as its leaders, it would long ere this have conquered the world.

Little is told us of the history of "the seven," but Stephen is portrayed in some detail, and he was a type, as well as a leader, of his comrades.

It is Stephen's faith which is insisted upon as his chief characteristic. The word denotes generally the faculty which apprehends the unseen; but in the Acts of the Apostles it specially indicates the faculty which realised the nearness of Jesus Christ the risen and ascended Lord. He who possessed this gift was able to say, not only in death but in life, "*Behold I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.*" Such faith is more than belief, and more than trust. It is a vivid realisation of what is unseen by the senses, and unproved by the intellect, but revealed to the spirit of a man by the Holy Ghost. Stephen would not have been described as a man full of faith, or full of the Holy Ghost, if he had merely believed that Jesus lived, and suffered, and wrought miracles, and taught important truths, and died on the cross. There was not a man or woman in Jerusalem who had the slightest doubt about such facts; but this belief of theirs was by no means saving faith, nor is it now. Indeed, a man's belief may be so broad as to embrace the facts of our Lord's resurrection, ascension, atonement, and future judgment of the world, and yet may fall far short of the "faith" Stephen had. Faith realises with intensity the nearness and the authority of our living Lord, who is fulfilling His promise, "*Lo! I am with you alway.*" And it is this which lightens our cares, inspires our work, sweetens our joys, and gives us victory over

sin; as it will give us, in God's good time, victory over death also.

It was this faith of his which enabled Stephen to understand, as few, if any, at that time did understand, the spirituality of Christ's kingdom. The marvellous address which he gave before the Sanhedrim in self-defence, reveals very fully the characteristics of his teaching; and it is impossible to study it carefully without seeing that, so far as the doctrine of the Church was concerned, his teaching constituted a new departure. He was unquestionably ahead of all the Apostles at that period in the breadth of his views, and in the far-reaching range of his outlook. They had confined their witness-bearing to Jerusalem and Judea, and it is emphatically said that it was the persecution which arose about Stephen which first scattered abroad the preachers of the gospel. Until then the seed-corn of the kingdom had remained on the threshing-floor, but that incident, in the mighty hand of Providence, flung it broadcast over other countries, fulfilling thus the Master's words, "*The field is the world*," for "*they that were scattered abroad, went everywhere preaching the word.*" Stephen's martyrdom was the cause of the scattering, and his doctrine was the cause of the preaching.

It is probable that Stephen startled his brethren as much as he angered the Sanhedrim. The substance of his teaching was this: "The worship of God is

not local, it never was; and now in Christ Jesus He intends to reveal Himself to the whole world, more fully than before." With the utmost boldness he appealed to the Old Testament Scriptures for evidence, that throughout Jewish history Jehovah had never failed to reveal Himself to some who lived beyond the limits of the so-called "holy land." He urged that God called Abram, the father of all the faithful, when he was living in Mesopotamia among heathen people; that Moses the great law-giver was trained in Midian, where there was no temple, though God Himself called it holy ground; that, in later times, although Solomon did build the Temple, the people were emphatically taught by inspired prophets that the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands. In short, all through his address Stephen brought into the light the real spirituality which underlay the former economy; and in doing this he used Scripture with a freedom and boldness which must have amazed his hearers, speaking as he did with such confidence about essential truth that he was careless about the exact phraseology in which it had been embedded. And this was the result of his "faith," which was to him the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for.

Such men are constantly needed by the Church. The age in which we live is crying out for teachers who have faith to lay hold of the essentials of religion,

and present them in their attractiveness to the world; caring little for the forms in which it has sometimes been clothed, and too often disguised. No doubt men will always need, as the Jews did, creeds and rites; but a truly inspired teacher, such as Stephen, will see in the heart of them the living Christ, the Eternal Word. Too often the germ of Divine truth has been so encrusted and congealed that it has proved powerless. It has been like a handful of seed frozen in, surrounded by ice which, though clear, is hard and cold. We can see the seed through the translucent substance. We know enough of its nature to believe that it has life in it. We may be able to count its atoms, and discuss its possibilities; but for all that the seed is not fulfilling the Divine purpose, which is that it should be flung broadcast over the soil, and produce a harvest. The only way to bring that about would be to break up its icy environment. How? Not by the rough hammer of a cynical criticism, which may injure the seed. What it really needs is warmth, sunshine which heaven can originate and pour forth. In other words, we need the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, which will melt the ice and free the seed, that it may bring forth a harvest in honest hearts and noble lives.

Stephen became what he was, because he was "*filled with the Holy Ghost*"; and unless a religious teacher has similar spiritual life, with outgoing of heart

towards God, and inflowing of holy thought and impulse from God, he will never be fit to undertake such work as Stephen did. If he tries to discriminate between what is accidental and what is essential in Christian doctrine, merely by intellectual acuteness, he may do more harm than good, by weakening in others the convictions which the world needs for its uplifting. But let him as a man of prayer realise the nearness of Christ, and the spiritual meaning of His mission, and teaching, and sacrifice, till he can speak of what he earnestly believes; then, though like Stephen he be stoned for heresy by the orthodox, he will revive and broaden the true Church of God. It is the man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, who alone can do "*great wonders and miracles among the people.*"

These wonders and miracles wrought by Stephen were only the consummation of far less conspicuous services which he had previously done, and these, at least, are not beyond our reach. Stephen's readiness to do the lowly work first assigned to him, is worthy of more than a passing reference. He was a man of culture, a keen disputant, a persuasive speaker; but he was elected by the Church to look after the distribution of money, the counting of collections, and the settlement of quarrels between some poor old widows. He did not regard this as beneath him, but undertook it readily, and discharged the duty with unfailing cheerfulness and efficiency. The

nobility of the man made the work noble. He accepted and accomplished it as part of the Lord's work.

Much depends upon the light in which we regard our duties, as to their pleasantness or winsomeness. Some which appear menial to outsiders may seem lofty and noble to ourselves. Refined Christians, rich in musical culture, will gladly lead God's praises in a little assembly where every tune sung jars their nerves. Gentlemen of good social standing will sacrifice their personal comfort, and lose the pleasantness of a reposeful service, in order to welcome strangers to their seats in God's house, though the strangers may be their own workpeople or servants; and they will pay as much attention to a poor old woman as to the richest of their neighbours. Others will look after the finances of the Church, or its ventilation, or its comfort, and will do for years, without recognition or thanks, menial work which they would not dream of doing in their own business; for they feel it is the Lord's work, in the Lord's house; and because they do it as unto Him, dignity is infused into the drudgery. Willingness to do any sort of work which needs to be done in connection with Christ's Church, is one evidence now, as in early days, of the presence of the Divine Spirit.

But a man so inspired will be sure to find opportunity for doing more than he first sets out to do. Stephen was not an apostle, nor even an evangelist

but he felt constrained to go and talk with those who thought of Jesus Christ as he had done before his conversion. He made his way to the synagogue of the Grecians, the Greek-speaking Jews, and there spoke of Jesus, urging his hearers to accept Him as the promised Messiah. We can imagine the excitement caused by his bold witness-bearing. The general opinion in Jerusalem was that the Nazarenes were heretical Jews, who had credulously accepted a pernicious superstition, started by a false prophet, who had been crucified as a malefactor at the previous Passover; and such people might consider themselves fortunate if they were simply left alone. Yet here was a man who was not content to be left alone or even to stand on the defensive. Single-handed he carried the holy war into the midst of the "Grecians," boldly declaring that now the Christ had come the Temple had served its purpose, and that the sacrifices had had their day.

Foremost among his antagonists was young Saul of Tarsus. Clever, well-read, skilled in rhetoric, versed in rabbinical lore, he flung himself into the fray with passionate vehemence. But Saul found his match in this earnest-souled man, and even he could not withstand the wisdom and the power with which he spoke. Thus, from serving tables, Stephen became a powerful preacher in the synagogue; and he who began by settling a small dispute, ended by making Jerusalem ring with his trumpet-tongued

words. Faithful with few things, he was made ruler over many.

God's true servants must never pass by opportunities for service, even though they may lie off the beaten track. They will not plead that, having undertaken one kind of work they ought to be excused from attempting another, if for it also they have time and strength—for God's work lies anywhere and everywhere.

Stephen's noble and consecrated life ended in a tragedy. The men who could not answer his arguments resolved to crush him. He was dragged before the Sanhedrim, and in the presence of that august tribunal he stood undaunted, though alone. As he spoke in defence of the cause he loved, his face seemed lit up by unearthly radiance. It was the glory of sunset at the close of life's day; or rather it was the brightness of dawn, because it ushered in for that illumined soul the day on which the sun would go down no more. "*All beheld his face, as it had been the face of an angel.*" He found no difficulty in marshalling his arguments, for it was given him in that hour what he should speak. With startling boldness he rebuked the learned judges themselves, and his keen, strong words cut them to the heart, till, in a paroxysm of fury, they sprang to their feet rushed upon him, hustled him out through the city gate, and there stoned him to death, while like his Divine Master he was praying for his enemies.

Was the life wasted? Was the noble testimony borne in vain? Not so. "*Saul was there, consenting to his death,*" but unconsciously drinking in the spirit of his life and teaching; and, in a few weeks, to his own amazement, and to the wonder of the Jewish world, he stepped boldly into the vacant place, and the Church owed Paul to the prayers of Stephen. As Augustine beautifully put it: "Si Stephanus non orasset; ecclesia Paulum non haberet."

We need never fear about the future of the Church. Though God's servants pass away till our hearts are saddened, and we fear that we shall never see their places filled, God will fill them in His own time and way. Joshua shall follow Moses. Elisha shall wear the mantle of Elijah. Paul shall take the place of Stephen, and to the world's end every generation shall have its own witnesses, for God and His truth, in men and women filled with faith and power.

CORNELIUS

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

CORNELIUS

CORNELIUS will always be of special interest to us as almost the first, if not actually the first, Gentile convert admitted into the Church of Christ. And though we are not told a great deal regarding him in the sacred record, the facts mentioned are of such a character as to leave on our minds a wonderfully clear impression of the manner of man he was.

I.

Cornelius is introduced to us as "*a centurion of the band called the Italian band*" (Acts x. 1), that is, a band composed of native-born Italians, and not of provincials, and there can be little doubt therefore that he himself was a Roman by birth and upbringing. Wearied, however, by the degrading superstitions of his country's faith, he had, like that other centurion of the gospel-story (Luke vii. 1 ff.), turned sympathetically to the Jewish religion. And though he had not gone the length of being circumcised, he evidently belonged to the wider class of proselytes, known as proselytes of the Gate, to judge from the

almost technical expression, "*one that feared God*," used by the sacred historian in describing him (*cf.* Acts xiii. 16, 26). It is, too, in keeping with this that Cornelius should have been distinguished by his observance of the three great laws of Jewish piety, alms, prayers, and fasts (*cf.* Matt. vi. 1-18). And it is highly significant that it was to him while thus faithful to the best light within his reach, that the vision which was to be the means of leading him into higher truth was granted. For to the devout centurion as he prayed about the ninth hour of the day, one of the customary Jewish hours for prayer (*cf.* Acts iii. 1), there appeared an angelic messenger with the assurance that his prayers and alms had gone up as a memorial before God, and that he would receive an answer to the doubts and questionings that were filling his heart, if he sent to Joppa for one Simon, surnamed Peter, who was lodging with a certain Simon, a tanner, by the sea-side. Strange though the command must have seemed to Cornelius he did not hesitate, but immediately dispatched two of his household servants, and a trusted soldier, who was in constant attendance upon him, upon the appointed quest.

II.

Meanwhile, as the messengers were still upon their journey, Peter himself had been undergoing a special

Divine preparation to qualify him for the new work to which he was to be called. For it must not be forgotten that not yet had the Apostle risen above his strict Jewish instincts and scruples, and that the very idea of admitting any Gentile into the Church without his first have become by circumcision a Jew, must have seemed impossible to him. And it required the vision of the great sheet, with its strangely assorted occupants of "*all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of the heaven*," accompanied by the express intimation, "*What God hath cleansed, make not thou common*," to open his eyes to the fact that the old distinctions and limitations had now been done away (Acts x. 9-16).

It was not an easy lesson for Peter to learn, and he was still "*much perplexed in himself*" as to what he had seen might mean, when close upon the vision came the task for which the vision had been the preparation. "*Behold*," so he was informed through the Divine prompting of the Spirit, "*three men seek thee.*" And no sooner had he gone down and learned from the messengers of Cornelius the cause of their coming, than he intimated his readiness to return with them to Cæsarea on the following day (Acts x. 17-23).

III.

The description of the meeting of Peter and Cornelius, which forms the third act in this interesting drama, is very graphic. Fully alive to the importance of the occasion, the centurion had gathered round him his kinsmen and near friends. And as the Apostle approached the outer gate of his quarters, he at once hastened to meet him, and falling down at his feet "*worshipped*" him. The word used does not necessarily point to religious worship, and may indicate only an act of profound homage; but that Peter felt the respect thus shown to him excessive, is proved by his vigorous protest: "*Stand up; I myself also am a man.*" And then in opposition to the traditional interpretation of the law forbidding intercourse with Gentiles, the Apostle entered the house along with Cornelius, and in answer to the inquiry why he had been sent for, learned from the centurion's own lips the story of the Divine answer to his prayers, in accordance with which he had dispatched his messengers to Joppa. "*And thou hast well done*," so Cornelius courteously continued, "*that thou art come. Now, therefore, we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord*" (Acts x. 24-33).

No longer could Peter be in any doubt as to what

was required of him. But—and it shows how powerfully the surroundings in which he found himself were affecting him—before he began to preach the gospel, he gave emphatic expression to the great truth he himself had just been taught: "*Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to Him*" (Acts x. 34).

In one sense, indeed, this was to Peter no new truth. It was directly implied in various injunctions of the Law (see *e.g.* Deut. x. 17), and the Apostle could hardly have forgotten that his Master Himself had taught that a willingness to do God's will, wherever found, was a direct step towards the knowledge of Divine truth (see John vii. 17). At the same time it was only now that he had really come to understand all that was involved in this, and to realise how vain were all outward privileges of race or nation as compared with the inward state of the mind and heart. That this essential condition for receiving a higher blessedness existed, in the case of Cornelius and his friends, could not be doubted, and to them, therefore, the gospel might be preached with the best possible hope of success.

It would take us beyond our present subject to analyse in detail the sermon that followed. It must be sufficient to notice that it fell into three main divisions. In the first, the Apostle gave a brief historical review of the earthly life of Jesus, summing

it up in a single phrase which would appeal peculiarly to his Gentile hearers: "*Who went about doing good.*" Then he passed to the great outstanding facts of which he and his fellow-apostles had been appointed witnesses—the death and the resurrection of their Lord, and His return as Judge to judge the quick and the dead. And then, finally, having thus prepared the way by showing who Christ was, and the true nature of His work, he concluded by pressing home on his hearers the great evangelical message of forgiveness: "*To Him bear all the prophets witness, that through His name everyone that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins*" (Acts x. 34-43).

It is tempting to see in these last words an anticipation of the Pauline Gospel of free grace for all, Jews and Gentiles alike; but that would be to put more into the words than the context justifies. For we are told immediately afterwards that, when in response to their believing acceptance of the truth the Holy Spirit fell on them which heard, Peter and those who had come with him were "*amazed*": while there is much in the Apostle's after-history to show that he must have regarded the relaxation of the old Jewish limitations, in the present case, as "exceptional—a temporary concession to specially worthy souls." And yet even this was an advance, which to Peter before would have seemed practically impossible, but which he now showed his readiness to seal,

by suggesting that the men to whose acceptance with God the Spirit Himself had thus publicly testified, should receive the outward mark of entrance into the Church of Christ. "*And He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ*" (Acts x. 44-48).

IV.

We have followed in detail this passage in the Book of Acts, in so far as it bears upon the history of Cornelius. But before parting from him, it may be well to gather up in one or two simple lessons the outstanding features of his character.

1. *We see in Cornelius a man who was faithful to the best light he had.*

In this time of unrest and doubt, when so many of the old truths are being attacked, and it is often so hard to know what we are really to believe, there is something inspiriting in the attitude of this Roman soldier, reaching out conscientiously to the highest truth within his reach, and keeping fast hold of it until more was revealed. We cannot suppose that Judaism, with its exclusiveness and particularism, could have satisfied Cornelius for long; but until he found something better he was content to abide by it. So ready was his acceptance of the Psalmist's trust, "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and He will shew them His covenant*" (Ps. xxv.

14): so firm his confidence in the prophet's promise, "*Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord*" (Hos. vi. 3).

2. *We see in Cornelius a man who, when the opportunity of further knowledge was presented to him, at once availed himself of it.*

The idea of his receiving help from one Simon, lodging at a tanner's house, might have seemed to him so very unlikely as to be hardly worth considering. But no! he did not hesitate. He was a seeker after the truth, and an earnest seeker; and, like all earnest seekers, was ready to embrace every opportunity by which the truth might be discovered, especially when that opportunity was offered to him by God. Already he had made God's will, and not his own will, the rule of his life, and he had his reward. For

3. *We see in Cornelius a man who, because he heard and obeyed, received the crowning blessing.*

We have learned already what that blessing was, and how to the devout and God-fearing centurion there was finally granted a full entrance into the Church of Christ, with all its accompanying privileges. But, as still further bringing out the greatness of these privileges, it may be noted that Cornelius affords the only instance in the New Testament of the special gift of the Holy Spirit preceding the baptism of a convert. It was as if God wished, on this epoch-making occasion, to distinguish in the clearest possible

manner, His work of inward grace from the outward act by which it was afterwards ratified; and to show that it was by the highest right, actual participation in the living Spirit, that the Roman centurion was recognised as a true disciple of Christ.

ST PAUL

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

ST PAUL

"Not disobedient unto the heavenly vision."—ACTS xxvi. 19.

THOMAS Carlyle has said that "Biography is by nature the most universally profitable, universally pleasant of all things: especially Biography of distinguished individuals." And if this is true of biography as a whole, it is certainly true in a very special sense of the biographies of the Bible. Nowhere else do we find such a gallery of distinguished portraits, or, which is far better, are we shown the lives of so many good as well as great men. And amongst the men who are thus held up to us as our spiritual leaders and guides, there is none who occupies a more honoured place than St Paul.

On the outward events of the apostle's life it is unnecessary to dwell. They are narrated with a fulness of detail in the sacred pages, which belongs, perhaps, to only one other Bible biography, the biography of David, the psalmist-king of Israel: and, at least in their main outlines, they are perfectly familiar to all. What we are rather concerned with, in the meantime, is the character of St Paul—the

manner of man he was—as he stands revealed to us in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, and especially in these great Epistles of his, in which he lays bare to us the inmost workings of his mind and heart. We cannot read the words of St Paul attentively—words which Luther in his graphic way described as "not dead words" but "living creatures" with "hands and feet"—without, at least, getting to know the man himself, and without seeing how, amidst all the changed circumstances of our modern life, he is still so admirably fitted to be our example, an example second only to that of the Master Himself.

For, to make only one other preliminary remark, there is one important particular, apart from everything else, in which the example of St Paul means more for us than the example of any of the other apostles. Like ourselves, he was not a personal disciple of Christ. With the single exception of the Damascus vision, he never, so far as we know, saw Christ: never talked with him, like St Peter, nor lay on His breast, like St John. And just because of this, because like ourselves he had not the opportunity of knowing Christ after the flesh, he can tell us—as none other can—how Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, and how gradually we too may be formed after His heavenly image.

What, then, to turn to our subject, are some of the leading features in St Paul's character; what some of the traits in that example which he still holds out

fore us, as he calls upon us to be followers—imitators—of him, even as he also was of Christ (1 Cor. xi. 1)? We must content ourselves with noticing briefly four points.

1. The first is, St Paul's *strong sense of the unseen*, or, in a single word, *his faith*. His whole life was lived in the closest dependence upon God, and the most earnest striving to make God's will his will.

I say advisedly, his *whole* life: for there can be no greater mistake than to regard the period of St Paul's life preceding his conversion as a deliberately wicked or irreligious period. Was it not rather the very depth of his religious zeal which led him, in accordance with his Hebrew birth and Pharisaic training, to strive so earnestly after the righteousness which is by the law? "*After the straitest sect of our religion*" he himself tells King Agrippa, "*I lived a Pharisee*" (Acts xxvi. 5); and elsewhere he speaks of the "*good conscience*" in which throughout all his life he had sought to serve God (Acts xxiii. 1). And was it not further this same sense of fidelity to God, as he then knew Him, that led to his persecution of the saints at Jerusalem? To St Paul in the Jewish stage of his career, the assertion that God's Messiah had been crucified on a tree could sound nothing but the rankest blasphemy; and, so far from fighting against God, he thought that he was doing God a service in ridding the earth of all such (to him) false followers of the Christ.

I have emphasised this point, because it is of the utmost importance that we should keep before us this essentially religious side of St Paul's nature—this determination to be true at all costs to the highest light he had—if we would understand that sudden and overwhelming change in his whole life which we commonly call his conversion ; an event which literally, to adopt a well-known expression, "cut his life in two with a hatchet" ; altered the whole current of his being ; and transformed, not as often by a long and gradual process, but as it were in a lightning-flash, Saul the persecutor into Paul the slave of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nor had St Paul himself any doubt as to how this change was worked. It came, so he is never tired of telling us, from a real vision of the risen Lord. In that awful moment in the Damascus road, Paul believed that he had actually seen the glorified Jesus. And henceforth, all that hitherto the proud Pharisee had counted "*gain*"—his Jewish descent, his Pharisaic training, his strict obedience to the law—all these he counted but "*loss*" for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. He knew now but one thing—to "*gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*" (Phil. iii. 8, 9).

2. For—and here we pass to a second point—this

vision of the risen Lord which was granted to St Paul did not remain *outside* of him only as an outward, historical event, it passed into him *as a transforming, energising power.*

It was on this aspect of his conversion that in later years the apostle himself principally dwelt. Thus, in recalling it in his first chapter in the Epistle to the Galatians, he says expressly, "*It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me*" (verse 16): "*in me*" mark! and not merely "*to me.*" And again and again, as has been often pointed out, he takes up this idea of being Christ's representative with startling boldness. "He says the heart of Christ is beating in his bosom towards his converts; he says the mind of Christ is thinking in his brain; he says that he is continuing the work of Christ and filling up that which is lacking in His sufferings; he says the wounds of Christ are reproduced in the scars upon his body; he says that he is dying that others may live, as Christ died for the life of the world." * It is not that St Paul is arrogant; but simply that the power of Christ has taken such a hold of him—he is so conscious of the new bond that has been formed between him and his Lord—that in a very deep and real sense he can say, "*I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*" (Gal. ii. 20).

And yet with all his marvellous self-consecration we are never allowed as we read his Epistles to

* Stalker, *The Life of St Paul*, p. 96 f.

forget, as St Chrysostom has reminded us, that "if he was Paul, he was also a man." Read, for example, his description of inward struggle—of the will to do good in the continual presence of evil—in Rom. vii., and who is there who is not reminded of his own sad experience; the Adam and the Christ who is in every man; "the angel" who "has us by the hand, and the serpent by the heart"? Or listen, as, in what is perhaps the most autobiographical of all his Epistles, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, he thus lays bare his inmost heart to his converts: "*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed*" (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9). And is there any one, however hardly he may be beset now, who can fail to recognise in St Paul a fellow-sufferer, and consequently to believe that as the apostle overcame, so may he?

Or, to look at this same truth from another side, was it not just because he himself had sounded all the depths of the human heart, that the apostle enumerates often at such length the moral duties that are to be avoided or followed.* What a terrible list that is of "*the works of the flesh*" against which he warns us in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians! How lovingly he lingers over "*the fruit of the Spirit*" in the description that follows: "*Love*,

* See M. Arnold, *St Paul and Protestantism*, popular edition, p. 24 f.

joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof" (Gal. v. 22-24). It seems almost as if he were afraid to leave anything out, lest in any particular he, or those to whom he was writing, should come short of "*the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*" (Eph. iv. 13). So humble was the great apostle! So conscious that he had not already attained, or was already made perfect! And at the same time so sure of, "*Christ in him, the hope of glory*" (Col. i. 27). As his experience has been summed up for us by a modern poet in well-known lines: *—

"Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ."

3. We have been thinking hitherto of the life of St Paul principally in its individual aspect. But we cannot forget that it was not for his own sake only or even principally that he was called, but *for the sake of others*, and that no sooner had the scales fallen from his own eyes, than he was *sent* to open the eyes of those who were still in darkness, that with him they might rejoice in God's marvellous light. The vision was but the prelude to the task.

* F. W. H. Myers, *St Paul.*

And that here again St Paul did not show himself "*disobedient*," is proved by the whole history of the Christian Church. For it is no exaggeration to say that it is to St Paul—always, of course, as the agent, the instrument of his heavenly Lord—that we owe the Christian Church as we find it in the world to-day. He first transformed it from being a mere Jewish sect into a world-embracing society; he first grasped and boldly proclaimed the universality of the gospel, and the freedom of the faith; he first broke down the barriers between Jew and Greek, between bond and free, and taught that all are "*one man in Christ Jesus*" (Gal. iii. 28).

It would have been pleasant, had space permitted, to have lingered over some of the features of St Paul's character, as they appear in this, his missionary work; but after all they can hardly escape even the most careless reader of his life. The true Paul cannot be hid. His was evidently one of those commanding personalities which make their presence and power felt in whatever company they find themselves. His hearers might agree with him, or they might oppose him; but, at least, they could not ignore him, as he passed from one sphere of work to another, never at rest, bearing on his frail shoulders "*the care of all the churches*," and yet ever seeking new fields to conquer in his Master's name.

And then how sympathetic, how tactful St Paul was! How ready to become "*all things to all men*,"

that he might "*by all means save some*" (1 Cor. ix. 22)! Can we wonder that his converts loved him; that the enthusiastic Galatians were ready even, if it were necessary, to pluck out their eyes and give them to him (Gal. iv. 15)?

Or what shall we say of St Paul's friendships? They meet us on every page—Barnabas and Silas and Mark and Timothy, who went with him on his missionary journeys: Luke, "*the beloved physician*," to whose companionship with the apostle we owe so much of the narrative in the Acts, and the spirit that inspired the Third Gospel; or, to pass to less-known names, Urbanus, "*our fellow-worker in Christ*"; Stachys, "*my beloved*"; Tryphæna and Tryphosa, "*who labour in the Lord*"; and Rufus, "*the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.*" How real the mere mention of these names in the Epistles makes St Paul to us! How our hearts warm to him, as theirs once warmed! How clearly we understand that it was out of his own living experience that the apostle wrote the great hymn in praise of Love in 1 Cor. xiii.; and bowed his knee to "*the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named*," that his "*little children*" might be "*strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*" (Eph. iii. 14, 18, 19).

4. All this, lastly, St Paul was able to do, because the vision in which his true earthly work com

pointed him ever forward to the perfect vision with which one day that work would be crowned.

If in the more formal aspect of his teaching St Paul was the Apostle of *Faith;* if in his relations to others he was the Apostle of *Love;* in his now personal religious experience he constantly reveals himself as the Apostle of *Hope.* "*By hope were we saved*," he expressly says in a well-known passage (Rom. viii. 24); and his earnest prayer for his Roman brethren is that "*the God of hope*" would so "*fill them with all joy and peace in believing, that they might abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost*" (Rom. xv. 13).

How indeed could it have been otherwise? What could have sustained St Paul amidst the trials of his own lot, and the discouragements and disappointments of his work, but the firm assurance that God would yet make all things work together for good to them that love Him, and the earnest looking forward to the day when "*in the name of Jesus every knee should bow*," and "*every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*" (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

The whole of the apostle's earthly life, in fact, was lived in the light of immortality—as he looked away from the seen trial to the unseen support; from the fashion of this world that passeth away, to the eternal realities; from the praise or blame of men to the judgment-seat of God.

"*I know Him whom I have believed*," this was his own triumphant assurance when the end was drawing very near, "*and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day*." And again, "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing*" (2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 7, 8).

Such, then, are some of the elements in St Paul's character. I have not tried to point the lessons they may teach us in recalling them; nor can I do so now. And, indeed, I should be sorry if it should be thought to be necessary. Surely the mere contemplation of such a life in its singleness of aim, in its untiring zeal, in its world-wide charity, and in its inextinguishable hope, is lesson enough for us all. And the more we try to enter into the mind of the great apostle, and to make his rule our rule, the more completely with him shall we learn that "*to live is Christ, and to die is gain*" (Phil. i. 21).

BARNABAS

By Rev. Principal WALTER F. ADENEY, D.D.

BARNABAS

THE beauty of the character of Barnabas is seen in the gracious spirit with which he allowed himself to be eclipsed by a younger luminary. Paul and Barnabas may be compared to a conjunction of binary stars which so revolve round one another, that though Barnabas at first shines with the brighter radiance, gradually his light wanes, while the brilliance of Paul comes to dazzle all eyes as immeasurably greater. Like John the Baptist, as the forerunner of Jesus, Barnabas, who introduced Paul to public notice, might have said, "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*" There is a resemblance to the case of the two sons of Zebedee in the change that is made with the order of their names during the course of the history. At first the Gospels give us "James and John his brother"; but in the account of the martyrdom of the former we find him described as "James the brother of John." Similarly at first we read of "Barnabas and Paul," and this order of the names is kept up till after what we commonly call "the first missionary

journey," the preaching tour of these two in Cyprus and Asia Minor. During the course of this tour the genius and force of character revealed in Paul inevitably brought him to the front, and, consequently, afterwards we find the order reversed, and read "Paul and Barnabas," though for once in describing a visit of the two companions to Jerusalem, where Barnabas was so well known and so highly honoured, St Luke reverts to the older arrangement. This recession of Barnabas, like the recession of James that was noticed in the study of that disciple, cannot be accidental. But in both cases the transposition is purely relative. There is no reason to think that Barnabas lost ground absolutely; it is only that he ceased to take precedence of Paul, owing to the unique position to which the apostle to the Gentiles attained. As far as Barnabas himself is concerned, this is not only not derogatory to him, it helps to bring out that graciousness of spirit which is his crowning virtue.

We first meet with Barnabas as a member of the primitive Jewish Church, noted as worthy of special honour for his exceptional generosity in that early glow of enthusiasm, when the brotherhood seemed tending towards a communistic social condition (Acts iv. 36, 37). Traditions preserved by Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius assign him a place among the seventy evangelists whom Jesus sent out to the towns and villages of Galilee. But these

traditions cannot be proved or tested; and seeing that Barnabas was neither a Galilean, like most of our Lord's personal followers, nor even a Palestinian Jew of Jerusalem, but a Hellenist, it is quite likely that he had been brought in among the converts at or after Pentecost. The manner in which he is first introduced suggests that he was not previously known. It is his act of generosity in selling his field and giving the proceeds to the church poor fund that brings him into notice, and even that seems to be mentioned mainly to serve as a foil for the story of Ananias and Sapphira. St Luke illustrates his account of the action of the brotherhood in raising a common fund for the relief of the needy by giving two incidents, one showing great generosity, the other meanness and deceit. First he tells of Barnabas, briefly, and then he plunges into the longer story of the two deceivers, as an instance of the opposite kind of conduct, saying, to mark the antithesis, "*But a certain man named Ananias*," etc. Still Barnabas is brought before us with an unusual amplitude of description, no doubt in view of his subsequent importance in the Church. He was a Levite, and, therefore, it might be supposed in sympathy with the Temple authorities, who had brought about the death of Christ, and to whom later Stephen gave mortal offence. But he was not one of the Jerusalem officials; at all events, he was not of a Jerusalem family, for he came from the

Cyprus Jews. A Hellenist by birth, he would have wider sympathies than the Hebraistic Jews. But this fact will not account for the very attractive character he presents to us in the history of the Church. Generosity is his great trait, generosity of various forms, seen in various ways, always ready to flow out wherever an opportunity presents itself. Accordingly there is more reason than usual in calling attention to the meaning of his name. The English phrase, "*son of consolation*," is too narrow for St Luke's original expression. For the word rendered "*consolation*"—*paraklesis*, cognate to which is *paraklete*—means also encouragement, exhortation, cheering helpfulness. Barnabas was recognised as a man who brought cheer and gladness wherever he went, one of those men whose very presence is like sunshine.

The first instance of this appears in a very concrete form. A superficial reading of "Acts" has led some to the conclusion that a system of pure socialism prevailed in the primitive Church at Jerusalem, that the members literally had all things in common. But though one or two expressions might seem to fall in with this notion, we must understand them to mean that the brethren held all they possessed with a view to the common good, never grudging to give any amount of it away as need required, holding their property, but holding it for the service of the community; so that the

poor fund to which they contributed freely never fell short of its requirements. This view is necessitated by the fact that a short time after there was trouble in the distribution among the widows, the Hellenistic widows appearing to have less than their share. If all the people had denuded themselves of every shred of private property, the widows would have been no worse off than other people; the whole brotherhood would have had to share in the general distribution. This reference to widows shows that they were the especially needy folk, and, therefore, implies that the rest of the community were in more comfortable circumstances. The two illustrations point in the same direction. If it was the rule that every member of the Church put the whole of his property into the common stock, there would be no reason to select the case of Barnabas, it would be in no way exceptional. Besides, St Peter's words to Ananias imply the very opposite, when he says, "*While it remained, did it not remain in thy power? And after it was sold, was it not in thy power? . . . thou has not lied unto men, but unto God.*" The lie was the sin, not the retention of part of the money, to which Ananias would have been perfectly free. We are to think of Barnabas, therefore, as especially generous in selling his field for the benefit of the community. It is using rather big words to say that he was a landowner who made over his estate to the Church—like a baron turning monk and

endowing a monastery. The field may not have been very large. Still, among those simple peasants, the fishermen and other working-folk who constituted the early Church, Barnabas was a man of property, and, in this respect, socially above the majority of the brotherhood. But this he ceased to be, putting himself on a level with the rest, and henceforth, losing the use or rent of his field, having to maintain himself entirely by the labour of his hands. He may not have been a rich man; but he had to face the rich man's difficulty, which Jesus held to be an insuperable hindrance to entrance into the kingdom of heaven without the special aid of God, with whom all things are possible. It may be as hard for the small freeholder to give up his little plot as for the great landowner to abandon his wide acres. To him it is the whole wealth he possesses.

Of course it is possible to make too much of this one act of generosity on the part of Barnabas. He will do greater things afterwards. We need not exalt him to the skies simply because this deed is recorded in the Bible, and ignore the fact that more remarkable sacrifices are told us of men in later days. Church history abounds with instances of people who gave up everything and took poverty as their bride. St Francis not only abandoned his home and all he possessed; he took off his clothes and only dressed himself in the old garments tossed to him as a beggar. Less fantastic and vastly more self-sacrificing was his

devotion of his whole life to follow in the footsteps of Christ as exactly as possible. Not less noble is the life of such a man as Francis Crossley—"the modern St Francis"—who though a most prosperous manufacturer, who might have amassed a fortune and lived like a prince, chose to spend a simple life among his own workpeople, devoting himself and his large business profits to the good of his fellowmen.

But while there is no reason to exaggerate the importance of this one act of Barnabas, it is interesting as exhibiting at the very first the leading trait of his character, his abounding generosity. We may find it the more valuable in this way because it is a concrete action. There is a pseudo-kindliness which evaporates in idle sentiments. It is very genial in manner, but it has no real generosity in matter. This mere pleasantness stops short at the point of self-sacrifice. As far as it goes it is agreeable enough. It oils the wheels of life for people to behave cheerfully and beam upon us with kindly smiles. The danger is that we should expect more from this than it really guarantees. When it comes to the pinch, when some trying service is needed, or some actual sacrifice is called for, your "pleasant fellow" is found wanting. While all is well he will greet you with a hearty hand-shake, and when you are in hopeless distress he may condole with you in feeling terms, seemingly a very "*son of consolation*." But in that

intermediate state of affairs when true friendship would be of practical use, but at the cost of some trouble, you find him most unsatisfactory. Then you discover to your disappointment that a ton of sentiment is not worth an ounce of service. It is well, therefore, on the threshold of the story of Barnabas, to find this agreeable man giving tangible proof that his kindness of heart is real and solid, and productive of material results.

The deeper qualities in the character of Barnabas first emerge when he comes into contact with Paul. This was soon after the wonderful transformation on the road to Damascus. When the converted persecutor went up to Jerusalem, he was at first coldly received. People could not believe that he was genuine. They thought his action a ruse, like a detective's confidence trick, and they fought shy of him. Considering the extraordinary circumstances of the case, this is not at all remarkable. Paul had been the fiercest of the antagonists of the Christians, "*breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord.*" Had he not gone on a self-chosen mission to Damascus, in order to kindle the fires of persecution in that city? To hear that such a man had suddenly become a follower of the faith he had been hitherto living to destroy, was the most unlikely news. People could not believe it. Then Barnabas came forward and took him by the hand, introducing him to the Apostles, warmly commending him for the good work he

had already done in Damascus (Acts ix. 26, 27). This was a doubly generous act, an act by the side of which the sale of the field looks commonplace. It was generous in its appreciation of Paul. Barnabas, as a Hellenist, may be reckoned a member of that section of the Church to which St Stephen had belonged. It does not appear that the martyrdom of Stephen was a part of a general policy of persecution, although that policy was a direct outcome of it. The provocation was found in Stephen's liberal theology. The Apostles were assiduous in their attendance at the Temple. But Stephen was thought to have spoken disrespectfully of the Temple and the ancient customs it represented. If, then, Barnabas was known to sympathise with the more liberal views, he might have been seized any day as a special object of aversion to the Jewish authorities. Paul had been consenting to the death of Stephen and taking some part in the scene. In the eyes of Barnabas, therefore, Paul would have appeared to be a very dangerous man. Yet Barnabas is the first Jerusalem Christian to welcome him. It is possible that he had known Paul in those early days before the troubles arose. Cyprus is not far from Tarsus, and there was constant communication between the island and that part of Asia Minor where Paul had resided in his youth. Then they were both Hellenists, both Greek-speaking Jews, natives of Greek provinces. Previous acquaintance and local sympathies and similarities

may have rendered Barnabas more ready than others to welcome Paul; but they are not sufficient to account for his courageous action. This sprang from his own noble nature. Barnabas has faith not only in God, but also in man, because he is sure that God can do great things for man. The one faith leads on by direct inference to the other. Barnabas can believe in the possibility of so great a wonder as the conversion of Paul by the grace and power of God; therefore he can believe in the genuineness of Paul's new profession of faith. The little, mean soul, narrow in its conception of God, cold in its own relations to the unseen, cannot believe in more than petty movements in religion. A vast volcanic upheaval, such as had taken place in the heart of the notorious persecutor, is wholly beyond its imagination, because it is quite out of the range of its experience. It is the large-hearted Barnabas who can believe in so tremendous a spiritual convulsion as the conversion of Paul. It is just such a man who can believe in goodness at all in an unexpected quarter. Small men are suspicious. It takes a large heart to judge generously. We are all tempted too much on the side of caution in dealing with our fellow-men. If our confidence has been abused in the past, we resent the deception and feel humiliated at having been over-reached. But it is better to cultivate wide sympathies and form generous judgments, even if sometimes we are taken in, than to

safeguard ourselves so completely against impostors that we also exclude worthy men from our recognition. It is worse to be unjust to one good man than to be swindled by half a dozen rogues. We are ourselves responsible for the injustice; but it is not we, but the rogues, who are responsible for the swindling.

Barnabas soon saw that he had not made a mistake in his generous judgment of the former persecutor. His true heart found, by genuine sympathy, that it had met one of kindred nature. This was the beginning of a true friendship between the two men, a friendship that united them in more than one partnership of service, though it was more than once disturbed by differences of opinion.

We next meet with Barnabas on an important mission which is entrusted to him, without any colleague. Some unknown Christians from Cyprus and Greece had gone to Antioch and preached the gospel to the Greeks in that great city, the capital of the Province of Syria. An important textual emendation here gives us "*Greeks*" in place of "*Grecians*," *i.e.*, Greek-speaking Jews, which was the reading of the "Authorised Version" (Acts xi. 20). This indicates a fact of primary significance. Antioch was destined to become the most important Christian centre after Jerusalem; it was to be the Gentile centre, while Jerusalem was the Jewish centre. True

to the wider sympathies of the larger life in association with the Greeks, but, better, true to the heart and essence of the gospel, Antioch was to be the headquarters of early Christian missionary work among the heathen. The founding of such a Church as that at Antioch was of supreme importance in regard to the spread of the gospel through the world, and that in a form suitable to all sorts of people, because free from the fetters of Jewish prejudices. This Church appears to have been mainly Gentile from the first. Now the founding of a Greek Church was brought about by the missionary zeal of a band of anonymous Greek-speaking Christians. These men had courage to attempt a novel enterprise, one fraught with world-wide and permanent effects, far beyond anything they could have imagined. It was not the official propaganda at Jerusalem, it was the unorganised activity of private Christians, that undertook and carried through this great work.

When the Jerusalem Church heard the startling news, it acted wisely ; it sent one of its members to inquire into the case. This was more sensible and more Christian than its action in the case of one or two subsequent delegations. The man chosen for this delicate and responsible task was Barnabas. Great confidence was reposed in him, for it was deemed sufficient to entrust the whole business tc him alone. Then he had not lost ground through

his boldness in introducing Paul to the Church. The fact that some of the evangelists at Antioch came from Cyprus, where Barnabas had been born, may have been in some degree a reason for the selection of him. He was to examine the work of his fellow-countrymen, perhaps men whom he knew personally. But a deeper reason is to be found in his known character. That character came out more clearly, and with delightful results, in the course of his mission. When he saw "*the grace of God*" among these Greeks and Syrians, "*he was glad*" (Acts xi. 23). No suspicion of Jewish jealousy found any lodgment in this generous man's heart. Not only was he glad sympathetically, for the sake of the Church at Antioch; a deeper joy was occasioned by an enlarged perception of the grace of God now brought home to him. He saw, with delight, that the gospel was working its wonders among the heathen. Like Columbus's discovery of the Western World, this was the discovery of a new, unsuspected continent—a fresh continent of Divine grace. The sense of enlargement, the widened horizon; and the uplifting with more exalted thoughts of the goodness of God—these two perceptions going together filled Barnabas with a rare, new gladness. He proceeded to encourage the new Church, exercising the talent which Luke thought he saw suggested by his name. The reason for all this is given us by the historian in a threefold characterisation of Barnabas. First, he was "*a good*

man"—"good" in the sense of kind, benevolent, generous; secondly, he was "*full of the Holy Ghost*" —one richly endowed with the new gift of the Spirit, inspiring his goodness and filling him with enthusiasm; thirdly, he was "*a man of faith.*" Here, as in the case of his introduction of Paul to the Church at Jerusalem, his faith in God and Christ led Barnabas to believe in the power of the gospel to save these Greeks at Antioch, and then to believe in them as genuine Christians.

The visit of Barnabas to Antioch resulted in a great enlargement of the Church. We must not think of him as a mere inspector, sent to investigate and report. The Church, which was small when he arrived, grew under his efforts till the work had surpassed the powers of one man, and Barnabas felt the need of an assistant. Then he went to Tarsus, where Paul was at the time among his own people, and fetched the apostle away to Antioch, and there the two laboured together for a twelvemonth. Thus, a second time, Barnabas serves as the introducer of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

It does not appear that Barnabas ever intended to live in Jerusalem again. He was now settled, full of fruitful work, in the Church at Antioch, when a famine at Jerusalem brought the Mother Church into a condition of want. Hearing of this, the Christians at Antioch made a contribution for the Jerusalem poor, and sent it up in charge of Paul and Barnabas.

Professor Ramsay has suggested that since what was needed was food, not money, it must have been a caravan of provisions that the two friends conducted. Is it too much to suggest that Barnabas may have made the proposal for this action of Christian love, which he was the chief person to carry out. It is always in some act of sympathy or kindness that he crosses our path.

After the return from Jerusalem, Antioch continued to be the scene where Barnabas and Paul lived and laboured, till a new move with vast consequences was made. A group of prophets and teachers at Antioch, among whom Barnabas is named first and Paul ("Saul") last, fasted and prayed in order to learn God's will for their future work. The answer to their prayer was that the Spirit of God—probably by the words of one of the prophets—indicated that Barnabas and Paul should be separated from the other evangelists and sent on a special mission tour. In this Barnabas takes the lead. After their solemn ordination the two missionaries first visit Cyprus, the home-country of Barnabas, and then, passing over to Asia and crossing the Taurus mountains, preach in the towns of South Galatia. In one of the most heathenish of these towns Barnabas is taken for Zeus, the king of the gods, and Paul for Hermes, the messenger god. This curious scene may afford us a hint as to the appearance of Barnabas. Statues of Zeus represent the Olympian god as a majestic,

bearded figure, while Hermes appears as a slender youth. But the more imposing appearance of Barnabas did not give him permanent pre-eminence. Before this tour is over the order of the two names is reversed. Henceforth—except once at Jerusalem, where Barnabas naturally retained a position of high honour—we read no more of Barnabas and Paul, but we have Paul and Barnabas.

It is regrettable that after this we have to face two incidents, which do not present Barnabas in so favourable a light. The first is when Barnabas would have taken his nephew, Mark, on a visit to the scene of the missionary tour, but was opposed by Paul. We cannot enter into the merits of the quarrel between the two friends to which this unhappy difference of opinion gave rise, as we do not know all the circumstances. Evidently Paul blamed Mark for giving up the previous enterprise when it involved crossing the mountains into the heart of Asia Minor. Barnabas's share in the affair shows him to be true to his nature. We must not dismiss this as a mere piece of nepotism. Have we not seen Barnabas all along to be a man of kindly disposition, generous, appreciative, not prone to suspicion, ready to see the good in people, willing to trust those whom others doubt? It is just like him that he should take the most favourable view of Mark's conduct, and stand by his nephew when he was being judged unfavourably by the more vehement apostle. The unhappy

consequence was, that the union of the two evangelists in common missionary work ceased from this time. Possibly, if the sharp contention had not occurred, it would not have been easy for them to continue in close co-operation. Paul was bound to be the leader; more and more, as time went on, his powerful personality dominated the Churches he had founded. And yet deference was always felt to be due to Barnabas, as the senior. It was easier for both to work apart. Of these two, it may be said, as Coleridge wrote of Roland and Sir Leoline, but really meaning Wordsworth and himself:

> "They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs which had been rent asunder,
> A dreary sea now flows between;
> But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
> Shall wholly do away, I wean,
> The marks of that which once hath been."

The last scene in which Paul and Barnabas are brought together is also painful. Emissaries of the narrow party who sheltered under the name of James at Jerusalem, having come to Antioch while Peter was holding familiar intercourse with the Greek Christians, that impressionable apostle drew back and ceased to associate at table with the uncircumcised. This was bad enough in the eyes of Paul; but what most annoyed him was that Peter's example was infectious. The mischievous leaven from Jerusalem was spreading, and "*even Barnabas was carried away*"

with what Paul calls "*their dissimulation*" (Gal. ii. 13). The point of this remark is in the word "*even.*" There is a world of meaning in that expression—"*even Barnabas!*" Paul's old patron and travelling companion, the man who had first sanctioned the Gentile Church at Antioch, the leader of the first great missionary tour in the Greek-speaking world, and a champion of the Gentiles at the Jerusalem Council—such a man caught in the current of reaction! It is too bad. Paul lays all the blame of it on Peter. Of Barnabas he seems to think only with sorrowful surprise. If he should be blamed, the fault may be found in a perversion of his chief merit—his kindliness of heart. He could not bear to differ from his old friend, Peter. Still, this meant unkindness to the Greeks, and, what is worse, injustice and an error in principle. It is an indication of the danger that threatens men of the genial type. In unguarded moments their sympathies may betray such men into wrong action, the immediate object of which is kindly meant.

We cannot go beyond Luke and Paul for sure light on the character of Barnabas. The harsh anti-Judaism of the epistle that bears his name in the Church is quite unworthy of him, and forbids us to accept that document as genuine. If Tertullian was right in ascribing our Epistle to the Hebrews to Barnabas, we have there a rich mine from which to draw information as to his mind and

character. But the question is too uncertain to permit of this with any degree of assurance. It is enough to note that the encouraging tone of the epistle is true to the nature of the large-hearted evangelist.

ONESIMUS

By Rev. J. MORGAN GIBBON

ONESIMUS

WHAT can the religion of Jesus do for a young man? Well, let me try to show you by means of an illustration. The Epistle to Philemon, the least of the little flowers of St Paul, was intended to illustrate this very question. Perhaps, the instance selected may astonish some and offend others. But the rich young ruler, though he makes a charming and suggestive figure in the gospel, is not a good illustration. He is not typical. Nor is Timothy, the young man we meet so often in the Epistles. He also is interesting but not representative. The typical youth must not be too clever, or fortunate, or good. He must have his difficulties, his mistakes, his full dose of original sin—and such was Onesimus. Neither heredity nor fortune had been kind to him. He belonged to the working-class of his age. He had no political rights. He was born into a servitude which gave no scope for ambition. He had nothing to live for except the few pleasures he could snatch from the table of life.

No wonder that, having a mind alive to the misery

of his lot, the spirit of revolt was aroused; and that seeing no hope of freedom from any other source, he became his own deliverer. That he stole money, is a baseless conjecture. But theft of money would would have been a small crime in the eyes of the law compared to what he had dared to do. A few lashes might have expiated the theft; but for a slave to call himself his own man, was a crime for which only the cross or the lamprey's pool could atone.

Of course he did right; but neither law nor gospel was ready for such a measure of right. Justice to all oppressed classes and races lay among the seeds Jesus had cast into the earth; but it was the least of the seeds, and as yet had not sprouted. Having made an enemy of the world and its hard law, he came to Rome. He made his appeal not to Cæsar, but to Christ in the person of Paul, the most eminent Christian then living; and Christianity did for him exceeding abundantly above all he could ask or think.

I.

Christianity gave him—himself; freely conceded his humanity, his moral worth with all the rights, and privileges, and duties of a man created in the image of God.

The world made many and wide distinctions. The world of freemen denied human rights to the

slave world. The world of the rich despised the world of the poor. The little world of genius looked down with contempt on the world of mediocrity. But in Christ's world there was no cynicism, nor disdain, nor arrogance, nor hate. Christianity knew no more of rich and poor, bond and free, than the sun which shines as kindly on the beggar as on the king. Nature had never reproached Onesimus with his servile condition. Birds had sung to him as he plodded his weary way to Rome; dogs had licked his hand and frolicked round him, delighting in his favour. Theirs was the love that knew nothing. But Christ's was the love that knew *everything*, and *yet*, and therefore, loved on. Christianity was scarcely prepared to go Christ's length, for the disciples are ever far in the rear of their Master. Nevertheless, when this youth challenged her in Christ's name she stammered forth Christ's own answer.

Might such an one as Onesimus take *all* that Jesus had said home to himself? Yes, all! Was a slave's soul of infinite value? Yes! Might *he* pray, saying "Our Father"? Yes! Might he believe that the Son of God loved him and gave Himself for him? Yes! Bit by bit, word by word, he drew it out of Paul. He took to himself the whole armour of God. The fabric of the world's social system lay shivered at his feet. Every yoke was broken. Onesimus was a *man* in Christ, a forgiven, redeemed

man. Let the world do its worst. He was inwardly free. He had found a basis for self-respect. He had found himself.

But how does this apply to present conditions? Is it not entirely to the point? Social forms have changed, but the spirit, the animus of the world, is the same; it despises poverty, it worships wealth and flatters genius. The infinite value of the soul is ignored. The transparent fictions of rank and position, birth and fortune, are placed above the supreme fact. The world judges by the adjective, not the noun. Men are robbed of their sense of dignity; defrauded of self-respect. And the appeal that ought to lie in a man's humanity is drowned by the clamour of lying oracles.

"Greatest among the solid gains of the Reformation," says J. R. Green, "was the new conception of social equality. Their common calling, their common brotherhood in Christ, annihilated in the minds of the Puritans that overpowering sense of social distinction which characterised the age of Elizabeth. The meanest peasant felt himself *ennobled* as is a child of God."

Ennobled as a child of God! What a tremendous phrase! A man *is*, by virtue of God's grace, greater than anything he can become by work or genius. A soul's inheritance exceeds its gains. Will any one deny that this is not a great need of to-day, and that Harnack was right when he declared that

what the mass of men ask for is not bread but recognition, the recognition of their moral worth and human status?

But of whom do they ask this? Of the world? The *world* must cease to be itself before it can grant their petition. Its towering pagodas of rank and caste are founded on the worthlessness of men. Materialism gives us our tyrannies, our war of peoples and war of classes, our thinly-veiled slaveries, and the whole progeny of parasites that live and move and have their being, at the expense of human nature.

But the kingdom of God is a kingdom of kings; it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Come boldly to the throne of grace. You whom men call insignificant, whom genius ignores, and power despises, come boldly to the people of Christ. And if *they* halt in their reply, lift your gaze and interrogate the Three in One. "Whom say YE that I am?" And the Father shall answer, "Thou art a man whom I made in My likeness, in My own image created I thee"; and the Son shall answer, "Thou art one for whom I died, thou art My brother, My sister"; and the Holy Spirit shall answer, "Thou art a living temple built by Me, for My own habitation!"

Let a youth reverently, humbly, freely take the Christian view of himself, and he will be saved from all sorrows of spirit, all bitterness of soul, from

sensuality and cowardice, from avarice and arrogance. His standing will be assured him. He can never rise above what he is by grace. That is a code of honour, a protection, a consolation, a joy that cannot be taken from him.

II.

Christianity gave Onesimus admission into a unique Community.

That community of forgiveness and love supplied all that was lacking on his own part. It gave him a noble ancestry. It furnished him with ideas, and kindled sublime ambitions within him. It gave him a new heredity. He shared in all that good men had gained. He reaped where others had sown. He had a portion in all the goodness that lay treasured in Christian souls. He was Paul's son, the son of his old age. He was Paul's self, and as such he was sent back to Philemon to be formally set free. He who on his outward journey saw the world clothed with frowns and threats, now looked on a smiling world in which all manner of delightful friendships grew and bore fruits.

Best of all, he was no pauper, nor a mere dependent in this new world of kindness. He had his place among Christian men as a man capable of service.

He was proclaimed by Paul as one whose absence from the apostle's side would mean a great loss to him, and whose welcome was assured if he ever came again.

The religion of Jesus gave his soul scope. It set free the pent-up energies of a lifetime. It gave the man to himself, and gave him also a world worthy of a man's love and activity.

What but Christianity could do such things at that time? What but Christianity can do such things now?

Our great cities swarm with educated youth for whose energies life has no adequate scope. With all their high spirits, their ambitions, their visions and dreams, they foresee a lifetime of commonplace drudgery in office, warehouse, and yard. Their work has no savour of soul, no taste of mind in it. As birds that reconnoitre the heavens through the bars of a cage, hundreds of thousands of young men catch glimpses of life through dingy windows, and feel as they look that they are chained to the dull and the small all their days.

Many plunge into pleasure, but "the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."

Even love itself loses its sweetness, and becomes soured like milk in sultry weather. We were created

for union and co-operation, for great and lasting things.

Hence the attraction which Pantheism has for many:

> "He is made one with nature: there is heard
> His voice in all her music, from the moan
> Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird!"

No real mourner was ever comforted with such thoughts; but they show the soul's desire for union with the permanent and the great, the craving of the part for the whole.

Now the religion of Jesus meets this desire. He is the true Vine, the Tree of Life, and through union with Him we are made one with all good and holy souls. Humanity, as the subject of redemption, becomes the object of our love. Scattered as yet on the face of time and place, blown about by many winds, men are gathered in Christ's love into a Rose of Souls, and we are petals of the heavenly Flower. Our place is assured. Our task is set. To every man in Christ is given a share in work that is immortal. The labour by which he wins his bread may be dull, mechanical, and painful. He may work out of sight, and dying leave nothing behind him to keep his memory alive. But Christ gives every man scope, allots to every man interesting and important work that cannot fail, for it is in very deed the work of God.

Mr George Meredith has said lately that conscription is unpopular in England, because Englishmen are afraid of being shot at. But may this not be due rather to a conviction which is gradually dawning upon us, that we were created for something better than to go forth to shoot and be shot at by men with whom we have no quarrel? May not the ancient superstition of war be passing away? We have fought and hated each other long enough. It is time to make peace. It is time we lived human lives. It is time we loved one another. It is time we turned to One that says, "*Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden. . . . Take My yoke upon you, and you shall find rest unto your souls.*"

III.

But was Onesimus to sail henceforth only in smooth waters? Were all the waves to be charmed for him? Ah, no! It was in a prison and from a prisoner's lips he heard Christ speak. His reception in his old home might not be favourable. Philemon's Christianity might lag far behind Paul's, for in the good ground some bring forth only thirtyfold. But this brief epistle contained one phrase that changed the perspective of life, and showed all its troubles in diminished proportion: "*Thou shouldest receive him*

FOR EVER." Life was life for ever. Love was love for evermore. Beyond the ridges of ice and snow a blue sky was shining that betokened blue water and fair winds. What if the cross awaited him in Colossæ, or even the crueler death of the lamprey's pond? "For ever" made amends. "For ever" paid for all. "For ever" made him invulnerable. He was a "for ever" man; of whom or what should he be afraid?

Can a youth have that assurance to-day? Why not? He may have it. But not by dint of sheer thinking. Not by picking God's lock and bribing gossiping spirits to tell their worthless secrets. Not as an amulet or charm. He can have it only in its place among the great truths in Christ's revelation. He cannot pick it out of its context. He must take it where it comes in the sentence. It is not a truth for the intellect only, nor for the emotions only, but for the whole man and for every phase of man's life. Its use is for inspiration and action, as well as for comfort, to enable a man to live nobly even more than to die peacefully. Let the youth of our day bend his will to Christ's yoke, and he shall verify this doctrine of the great "for ever" in his daily experience. The truth shall make free from every fear. The Christianity of many Christians is a sorry affair. The Christianity of the Churches lags far behind the New Testament. But meanwhile there *is* the New Testament. It holds out Christ's incomparable offer

to us all. Let us fall in with it! What if Philemon and Apphia and Archippus, and their Church fail us? We have the mind of Christ. Let us rejoice in our Lord and follow Him whithersoever He goeth.

TIMOTHY

By Rev. GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

TIMOTHY

AMONGST the friends of St Paul there is no one who appeals more to our interest and sympathies than Timothy. For not only was he associated with the apostle during a longer period than any of his other companions, but he was evidently regarded with an altogether peculiar affection and esteem. He was St Paul's "*true child in faith*" (1 Tim. i. 2), of one mind with himself (Phil. ii. 20), and working the work of the Lord even as he did (1 Cor. xvi. 10). All, therefore, that we can learn regarding Timothy is significant for the light it throws upon the character alike of the pupil and of the master.

The early home of Timothy was at Lystra, and owing to the general Grecising tendency of the district, we are not surprised to learn that while his mother was a Jewess, his father was a Greek (Acts xvi. 1). We do not, however, even know the latter's name; and as there is no further reference to him in the Acts or the Epistles, it is probable that he died during his son's infancy. In any case, the upbringing of Timothy would appear to have devolved upon his

mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois, and by these two pious women he was carefully instructed in the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 15). It was, of course, only the books of the Old Testament which were then available; but it is not improbable that some tidings, at least, of the new doctrines which were agitating the Jewish party at Jerusalem had already reached Lystra, and that when St Paul on his First Missionary Journey arrived there, he found a ready welcome at the house of Eunice. If so, can we doubt that the young Timothy would be a witness of the apostle's sufferings at the hands of his fellow-townsmen (*cf.* Acts xiv. 19 ff.; 2 Tim. iii. 10, 11), and may even have been amongst those who supported the stunned and bruised man back into the city? It is, at any rate, to this visit of St Paul that Timothy's conversion to Christianity was due (1 Cor. iv. 14-17); and during the time that elapsed before he again met the apostle, we can think of him as preparing himself by prayer and careful study of the Scriptures, for the work to which he was to be called.

The circumstances of that call are fully narrated in the Book of Acts. St Paul was again in Lystra, and on all hands he heard good accounts of one whom, from the circumstances of his first visit, he had never ceased to regard with tender affection (Acts xvi. 1 ff.). Why, then, should not Timothy, so the apostle asked himself, become his travelling-com-

panion and fellow-worker in place of Mark, or even of Barnabas, over whose sudden departure he was still grieving? And no sooner had he been confirmed in this decision by certain prophetic utterances (1 Tim. i. 18; iv. 14), than the necessary steps were taken for giving effect to it. Solemnly the young man was set apart for this new ministry by the laying on of hands of the local presbytery (2 Tim. i. 6). And as, moreover, owing to his half Jewish birth, he had not yet been circumcised, St Paul had the long-deferred rite performed, in order that no needless offence should be caused in the Jewish circles, amongst whom, in the future, so much of his work would lie (Acts xvi. 3).

The parting with her son would be a sore trial to the widowed Eunice. He had been so much to her: she, stronger tie of love still, had done so much for him. Nor could she shut her eyes to the hardships and perils which now lay before him. The mother in the American war "who kissed her only son on the doorstep, and through her tears said, 'Go, my child, your country needs you,' and then turned round to find all the light gone out of her humble home," was not more self-sacrificing than she. Like Hannah of old, she recognised an even higher call than that of earthly affection: "*I have lent him to the Lord, as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord*" (1 Sam. i. 28).

Nor was this confidence misplaced. From this

time onwards Timothy was one of St Paul's most devoted followers, slaving for him as a son for a father (Phil. ii. 22). Thus there can be little doubt, though the fact is not expressly mentioned, that he was with St Paul and Silas both at Philippi and at Thessalonica, escaping, perhaps, the persecution that befell them in these places from his comparative youth and insignificance. And at Berœa we are expressly told that he was left behind to carry on those discussions and reasonings with the Jews on the Old Testament Scriptures, for which his early training had so admirably equipped him (Acts xvii. 10-14). At Athens he again rejoined the apostle, only, however, to be dispatched as St Paul's "*brother and God's minister in the gospel of Christ*" to the young Church at Thessalonica, in order to establish and comfort the brethren there in the sufferings that were falling upon them (1 Thess. iii. 1 ff.). Meanwhile, apparently Silas was dispatched on a similar errand elsewhere, and St Paul went on alone to Athens. But how much the apostle missed his two trusted associates, and the inspiring power of their companionship, is shown by the emphatic statement, that no sooner were they again with him than he was "*constrained by the word*" (Acts xviii. 5)—carried on, as it were, irresistibly into new departures of activity and zeal.

Timothy is not again mentioned by name until we find him with St Paul at Ephesus on the Third

Missionary Journey, though he may well have been with the apostle during the whole intervening period (Acts xix. 22). And how completely, by this time, he had become St Paul's right hand and helper, is shown by his dispatch first to Macedonia along with Erastus (Acts xix. 22), and afterwards to Corinth.

His mission to the latter place was evidently a very delicate one, and fearful of the result St Paul bespoke for his envoy a kindly welcome, in a letter in which he explained the object of his coming. "*I have sent unto you*," so he writes to the Corinthians, "*Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church*" (1 Cor. iv. 17). And in a later passage in the same epistle he earnestly calls upon the Corinthians to respect Timothy's timidity, and to set him forward again on his journey in peace (1 Cor. xvi. 10). Timothy was evidently of a shy and sensitive disposition, and St Paul, whom "*the care of all the churches*" never made forgetful of the courtesies of everyday life, desired that nothing should be done to wound or annoy him. But the appeal, so kindly meant, would seem to have been in vain, if, as many scholars hold, we are to identify Timothy with the wronged sufferer of 2 Cor. vii. 12. In any case, the news which he brought back to St Paul from Corinth were evidently of such a disquieting nature as to call forth from the apostle a

severe epistle, now lost (unless, as is sometimes held, the greater part of it is embodied in 2 Cor. x.-xiii.), in which he demanded the severe punishment of the offender. This epistle was followed by yet another epistle to the Corinthian Church—our so-called Second Epistle to the Corinthians — which was dispatched from Macedonia by Titus and two brothers (2 Cor. viii. 16-23), and in the writing of which Timothy was associated with St Paul (2 Cor. i. 1). And shortly afterwards he visited Corinth itself along with the apostle, to judge from the occurrence of his name in the salutations of Rom. xvi. 21 ff., a chapter which is believed to have been written at this time from Corinth.

From Corinth Timothy crossed over to Troas, where, along with other brethren, he awaited the arrival of St Paul, who had been making the longer circuit through Macedonia (Acts xx. 4, 5). But we are left uncertain whether from thence he accompanied the apostle on his last visit to Jerusalem, or was again dispatched on a mission to some of the new European Churches. In any case he was certainly with St Paul in Rome during the two years' imprisonment, for three of the Epistles of the captivity —those to the Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon— are written in their joint names, and in the first of these St Paul expresses his hope of sending Timothy shortly to Philippi that he may know the state of his converts there (Phil. ii. 19 ff.). Whether this

visit was ever carried out, we have no means of determining; but shortly after St Paul's release from his first imprisonment, we find Timothy with him at Ephesus, and on the apostle's passing on into Macedonia, perhaps in consequence of his second arrest, Timothy remained behind to check as far as he could the heresy and licentiousness of the great Eastern city (1 Tim. i. 3)—a hard task, for which the youthful overseer or bishop would require all the encouragement which St Paul's loving letters to him contained (1 Tim. iv. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 15, 22-26; iv. 1 ff.).*

Whether Timothy ever again saw his master—his spiritual father and friend—is uncertain. We know, indeed, that St Paul wrote to him from Rome during his second imprisonment, begging him to come and join him, for he was almost alone (2 Tim. iv. 9 ff.). And we may be sure that if it was possible Timothy would go. One would like to think of him as cheering St Paul's last hours on earth, and as standing by—his last office of sympathetic friendship—when, on the Roman Campagna, the great apostle's head fell before the executioner's sword.

No one, at any rate, would more truly mourn St Paul's death, for none was bound to him by ties of

* Throughout this paper I have made free use of the two Epistles to Timothy, because even supposing that in their present forms they are not the work of St Paul, it is now generally admitted that, particularly in their more personal parts, they embody genuine Pauline materials.

closer affection. St Luke may have been the apostle's physician during his lifetime, and his biographer after his death: Barnabas and Silas and Apollos, among his companions, may have been more prominent in the eyes of the Church at large; but to the gentle, loving Timothy it was given in a special degree to be the apostle's friend—the disciple whom Paul loved—and one who was so thoroughly imbued with his master's spirit (Phil. ii. 20), that he proved a worthy successor to him in the great work to which both were called.

From this time Timothy disappears from the Bible narrative; but, if we are to believe tradition, he still continued, after St Paul's death, to act as Bishop of Ephesus, and eventually died a martyr's death there, protesting against the license which accompanied one of the city's festivals.

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